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ABSTRACT

Designed for use in grades K-12, award winning teacher-developed projects and courses in economics are described. Descriptions indicate grade level, project background, time allotment, objectives, activities, and evaluation. Arranged into 5 chapters, chapter 1 suggests ways to teach economic concepts to grades K-3. Projects include a lesson on specialization and technology, economics through literature and song, the economic impact of weather, and using stories such as the "Elves and the Shoemaker" to present basic economic principles. Chapter 2, for grades 4-6, investigates economic aspects of education, the economic impact of pets on our society, and the interrelationships between the ocean, ecology, and development of natural resources. Chapter 3 presents ideas for learning activities in the junior high social studies curriculum, a simulation game relating economic concepts to Alaska, a unit on the fluctuating economy of the 1920's and 1930's, and games to teach the economics of colonial America. Chapter 4, projects for senior high school students, includes tips for teaching economic concepts in Latin class, a minicourse entitled "The Westward Movement: The Cost of a New Beginning," interdisciplinary approaches to teaching economics, and an economic parable designed to foster economic reasoning. The concluding chapter discusses buying a home, the relationship between changes and economics, and a project designed to provide economic education for inner city parents. (LH)

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ECONOMIC EDUCATION EXPERIENCES OF ENTERPRISING TEACHERS

Edited by Andrew T. Nappi and Anthony F. Suglia

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A report developed by the
Joint Council on Economic Education
From the 1982–83 entries in
The International Paper Company Foundation
Awards Program for the Teaching of Economics
JCEE CHECKLIST NO. 336

VOLUME 21

TO OUR READERS

The accounts published in this book are condensed versions of the original projects. Copies of the complete reports can be obtained from:

National Depository for Economic Education Awards
Milner Library 184
Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois 61761

This volume of award-winning lessons has been exempted from review by the Publications Committee of the Joint Council on Economic Education because a panel of educators has judged the contents.

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Foreword

As with many Americans, we at the Joint Council on Economic Education have been alert to the several reports completed by various national commissions describing the status of and problems related to education in the schools of the United States. Although we are highly sensitive to the many concerns raised in these reports, we are, however, proud of the extent to which we have influenced the expansion and improvement of economics education in the schools of the nation and are pleased that a number of our recommendations have been included in the commission reports. Without exception, the various reports call for an improvement in the competency of teachers, and the economics education effort has clearly been on target with respect to this recommendation.

The Joint Council on Economic Education is especially pleased to publish Volume 21 in the series *Economic Education Experiences of Enterprising Teachers,* since it offers strong evidence that creative, imaginative, and effective teaching is occurring in a significant number of classrooms throughout the nation. We are sure that readers will find the teaching projects this volume contains, which vary from introducing economics into a Latin class to buying a home, to be examples of the quality teaching the commissions call for.

This publication is an important part of the National Awards Program for the Teaching of Economics. Through the generous support provided by the International Paper Company Foundation, the Joint Council on Economic Education is able to recognize and reward the outstanding and dedicated teachers whose projects were selected by a distinguished panel of judges from over 350 entries. Many of the winners were previously selected as award winners in state awards programs.

While we are proud to publish abstracts of the winning projects, we are also delighted to encourage use of these projects by other teachers throughout the United States. It is our hope that the teachers who read the abstracts will adopt or adapt these effective teaching strategies for use in their own classrooms.

An activity as large as the National Awards Program for the Teaching of Economics requires the efforts of a significant number of individuals. Several Joint Council staff members deserve special mention and appreciation for their efforts, including Michael A. MacDowell, president, for his suggestions and ideas, and Diane Rodriguez, Claire Moe, and Marianne Rosse for their indispensible efforts.

The editorial work necessary to prepare this booklet is challenging, and we appreciate the work of Andrew T. Nappi, dean of the College of Business, Illinois State University, for his dedicated and conscientious services. We are also indebted to Lawrence A. Mayer and Ester Moskowitz of the Publications Division of the Joint Council.

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Last, but by no means least, our sincere appreciation goes to the members of the committee of judges, who perform a very difficult task. We are most fortunate for their continued interest and involvement.

The National Awards Program for the Teaching of Economics is made possible through the support provided by the International Paper Company Foundation. The Joint Council offers its special recognition and appreciation to the foundation, and to its vice president, Gladys F. Waltemade. We are pleased to be able to say to the IPCF that the twenty-first annual program was highly successful and attained all its objectives.

To the 354 educators who prepared the projects submitted to the Joint Council, we say "thank you." Your services to teaching and enthusiasm for it provide significant evidence that you are offering classroom instruction which brings credit to the teaching profession and responds usefully to the recommendations of the national commissions.

Anthony F. Suglia
Director, Affiliated Councils and
Centers Division
Coordinator, National Awards Program

Editor's Introduction

The reports published in this book are condensed versions of the original projects, some of which cannot be presented or even summarized easily. The attempt in Volume 21—as in its predecessors—is to provide brief descriptions of the winning entries which capture the essence of the teaching projects. I am confident that teachers who have submitted projects but failed to win will be helped by the following summary of the characteristics of the winning entries.

1. *The project should include a succinct statement of the goals or learning objectives, both cognitive and affective.* The list of objectives need not be long; it should, rather, be clearly articulated and related to the instructional program. Statements of objectives help the judges gauge the worth and effectiveness of the entry.

2. *The judges should be able to discern how each unit, lesson, method, or activity in the project helps to develop economic concepts and generalizations.* That does not mean that mathematical, writing, reading, or other skills are not important, but simply that awards must go to entrants who focus on the teaching and learning of economics.

3. *The procedures and sequence of activities should be well-organized and clearly described.* This portion of a report should emphasize the materials, time schedule, introductory procedures, assignments, activities or strategies, and the review process. Motivational technique must be spelled out and instructional activities described in detail. How did the teacher get the pupils interested in the ideas to be taught? How was the lesson, unit, course, or subject begun? The duration of the project should be given at the beginning: a year, a semester, a few weeks, a single lesson, or whatever. If less than a full course, the author should describe how the project fitted into the curriculum being taught and how it was related to the preceding or following material.

4. *Winning entries should clearly describe the instructional environment and class situation.* The judges want to know the ages, ability levels, or special characteristics of the students. If the project was developed for a particular socioeconomic or ethnic group, the judges must be informed.

5. *A precise account of the teaching techniques used should be given.* The basic purpose of the Awards Program is to help other teachers, and that can be achieved only if the author gives a detailed account of the methods employed. For example, it is not enough simply to say that a resource speaker was used—the reader should be told exactly how the speaker presented economic ideas, what follow-up activities were conducted, how these activities fitted into the total project, how the endeavor was evaluated, and so on. Where appropriate, sample lesson plans should be included, along with assignment sheets, instructions passed out to students, and the like. Complete details about the personnel and material used should be included in the report.

6. *The project should show originality.* It ought to be more than a rehash of someone else's work. At the least, it should give an entirely "new twist" to an idea developed in a previous year. While ideas that captured awards in years past may still be good, the awards must go to those who develop fresh ideas for teaching economics.

7. *Photographs or samples should be included in lieu of student work, bulletin board arrangements, table displays, murals, and other items that cannot be shipped.* It is not necessary to submit large or bulky material if a photograph will suffice. Neither is it necessary to send in everything the students have done. A few examples—one or two typical term papers, for instance—will do.

8. *The procedure for the project should be explained in terms of the three basic constituents of every good teaching unit.* The first helps to get the pupils interested in the unit, project, or lesson; the second develops the ideas, concepts, skills, and attitudes that are the goals of the activity; the third brings the activity to a close by summarizing and applying what was taught. Plays, assembly programs, displays, field trips, the making of filmstrips, simulations, and many other devices can be used to help conclude a unit.

9. *Evaluation techniques should always be submitted.* These generally include tests of various types (e.g., short-answer, essay, performance) but can also include less formal methods, such as self-evaluations by individuals, groups, or the class; written or oral evaluations by outsiders; and observations of pupil behavior. The testing instruments along with the results should be submitted with the entries.

10. Finally, *entrants should pay attention to the requirements set forth in the Awards Program Application Form, arrange the material in an orderly fashion, and help the judges by presenting their entries as neatly as possible.*

An educator whose submission has the ten characteristics listed above will have a good chance of winning. It should be noted, however, that the competition is keen, and that each year it becomes more difficult to win than the year before. Prospective entrants would be well advised to seek outside comments and criticisms before submitting their projects. In particular, a teacher with little formal training in economics should consult an economist about the accuracy and appropriateness of the economics used. Many projects represent an enormous expenditure of time and effort and contain superb ideas and materials for teaching, but nevertheless fail to capture an award because they contain little or no economics or because the economic content is inaccurate.

It might be well for a contestant to review the suggestions below prior to preparing an application. Almost any logical and descriptive outline will serve as a guide for writing the narrative section of the project. The important thing is to work from an outline.

1. *Introduction.* Introduce the judges to what is to follow and thereby set the stage, so to speak , for the project description. The introduction should be brief and should also describe the general purpose of the project.

2. *Background information.* Give the reviewers an understanding of the following points: purpose and philosophy of the curriculum for which the project was developed, location and physical facilities of the school in which the entrant teaches, background and capability of the students, brief history of the project, and other information that may help the judges determine the teachability of the project.

3. *Overall goals and specific objectives.* Whereas the overall goals of the project can be given in a generalized narrative form, the instructional objectives should be very specific and are usually presented as a list. The overall goals may be thought of as long-ranging results that depend on the achievement of the specific objectives.

4. *Program description.* Reviewers will want to learn from this section what is to be done, how it is to be done, and who will do it. The procedures should be explained fully and in great detail. It can be a serious mistake to assume that the judges will comprehend the details of what, to the applicant, is a well-understood economic concept or instructional technique. The teacher should assume the judges know nothing whatever about what is being presented in the project. The sequential steps of the procedure should be logically arrayed and lengthy digressions avoided—no matter how interesting such digressions may be to the writer. Conciseness leads to clarity.

5. *Program evaluation.* The reviewers will be helped by objective evidence of what was accomplished in the project. Some systematic objective evidence of the extent to which the instructional aims were achieved must therefore be provided, and it must be described in the narrative. For this reason, the application should include a section on how student achievement was evaluated.

The editor hopes that this summary of what constitutes a good project entry will be useful to educators. He deeply appreciates the work of those teachers (nonwinners as well as winners) who are contributing to greater understanding of economics in our society. He also hopes that increasing numbers of teachers will enter the Awards Program in the future, thereby sharing their knowledge and experience with others as well as possibly receiving a financial reward.

The editor acknowledges with sincere thanks the cooperation of the teachers whose ideas appear in this volume. They have been most gracious in permitting us to use their material as well as being patient and understanding in agreeing to our editorial revisions.

Andrew T. Nappi
Illinois State University

CHAPTER ONE

Something Old – Something New in Economics

A Third-Grade Economics Unit

Helen M. Wells
Charleston Elementary School, Charleston, Arkansas

Introduction

My third graders became interested in specialization and technology after reading about Mrs. Pearl Shirley in the December 3, 1982, issue of the *Weekly Reader*. It stated that she is 90 years old and operates a 1,000 acre ranch in California by herself. She lives in a tiny wooden house, cooks on a wood stove, and reads by a lantern. It was this part of the story that intrigued the students. All the children wanted to tell about old items that their grandparents or great-grandparents had. Much enthusiasm was shown when the following question was presented: "Why do you not live like your grandparents?" This discussion launched our semester-long economic study.

Objectives

The objectives were to acquaint the students with the basic economic concepts, to show them how these concepts affect them, and to help them apply the principles to their daily living. I also wanted to guide the students in discovering and appreciating the many goods and services available today that were not available to their grandparents. Furthermore, I wanted the students to be more appreciative of the knowledge of their grandparents. Finally, I sought to integrate economics into all areas of classroom study.

Teaching Strategies

Economic terminology and concepts were highlighted in all the activities. After an economic term was used as the "Word of the Day," it was placed on the bulletin board under the title "Economic Vocabulary." Students used the terms to illustrate "Economics Around the Clock." Information from the talks by the resource people furnished material for notes and letters, outlines, paragraphs, and creative writing. Dictionary work centered around the economic concept being taught. Famous inventors were researched while old sayings became the weekly memory work. Worksheets explained the economic concept or term being taught and reviewed a reading, language, or mathematical skill. Several resource people gave talks or demonstrations during the project.

A collection of old readers and social study books on various reading levels—first through the sixth grade—became known as the economic library. I went through the contents of each book, listed the stories related to economics, and taped this list to the inside cover of the book. In many instances only one story or picture was applicable. These books became very popular with the students.

Teaching Activities

Seven basic economic concepts were studied and related to the lifestyle of the children and the senior citizens—scarcity, decision making and opportunity cost, economic goals, productive resources, resource extenders, institutions, and circular flow. These were studied to give the students a better understanding of the economic concepts as they were applied to the march of progress from the days of the self-sufficient family to our day of specialization and interdependence.

1. Scarcity. The students had encountered scarcity in their everyday living because at the time the project was started, the economy was in a slump and many parents in the community were out of work or concerned that they would be. The students studied the terms *consumer, producer, wants, consumer* and *capital goods, durable* and *nondurable goods,* and *services* in relation to the concept of scarcity.

A worksheet, "Economic Game," was used to introduce the students to consumers and producers. By putting scrambled words in the correct sequence, the questions "Who is a consumer?" and "Who is a producer?" were answered. Making soup in the classroom gave the students first-hand experience in being producers and consumers. The youngsters experienced division of labor in deciding who would peel the potatoes, carrots, and onions for the soup. Advancement in technology was demonstrated by the use of a vegetable cutter compared to a knife to chop the vegetables. In the afternoon when the soup was ready, the producers became consumers.

Each student completed a worksheet structured to reinforce student understanding of the words *consumer* and *consumption.* The reading skill of adding the common endings *er, ed, s,* and *ing,* to the word *consume* or other base words was reinforced.

During the study of goods, pictures from a catalog were used on a bulletin board titled "Goods," and also on a flannel board titled "Goods: Consumer and Capital." Since we were involving the senior citizens and their era, we had a board labeled "Capital Goods—Many Years Ago." As pictures of old-fashioned capital goods were found, they were added to the display. A follow-up lesson was a paper, "Consumer and Capital Goods: Then and Now." A good used years ago had to be matched with its counterpart of today; for example, washboard and tub to an automatic washer or an iron kettle to an electric skillet. The term *goods* was expanded to durable and nondurable. After learning the meaning of the terms, each student had to identify each item on a list of twenty goods as durable or nondurable. The reading skill of using an index in a book was taught.

Services available today were listed on the chalkboard; to familiarize the students with the services that their grandparents had, a worksheet was written. The service was listed and the name of the producer was in the word bank—cobbler to repaired shoes, ginner to ginned cotton, and miller to ground corn.

To enhance this phase of our study, a senior citizen visited the classroom and displayed irons that she had used when she was young. She explained that ironing was a service. Following her talk, I wrote a narrative using the information which she had given as enrichment reading for the students. This paper stressed the reading skill of getting meaning from content.

To introduce wants a composite list was made on the chalkboard; through discussion the category was defined. I then asked the students to classify the list of wants under the headings of food, shelter, and clothing. Then the students had to draw illustrations of their wants. Classifying words was the reading skill reviewed.

During the time we were studying scarcity, three senior citizens visited the classroom and explained about goods that were produced in the home years ago. One brought a shuttle and demonstrated making lace by tatting. Interest was intent when she said that she had made twenty-five yards of lace for parlor curtains when she was young. She brought a piece of tatting for the students to see and to have for display. She continued her talk by showing a feed sack and telling the class that the material was used for making dresses, shirts, quilts, curtains, and other household items.

Amber's great-grandmother was another visitor. The students were fascinated by her description of the making of cottage cheese. She told them that the milk was allowed to clabber, then heated, and then put into a cloth sack and hung on the clothesline to allow the whey to drip out.

Another senior citizen shared her experience of making lye soap and doing the family laundry. She said that grease and lye were cooked in a large kettle outside, stirred with a sassafras stick, allowed to harden in a shallow container, and then cut into bars. Then using a bar of lye soap, washboard, and a tea towel, Mrs. Harrison demonstrated to the students how the clothes were rubbed against the board, submerged in the water, and then rubbed until they were clean. During the discussion that followed the talks, the students decided that today a family depends on many other people for soap, butter, cottage cheese, or lace.

2. Opportunity cost and decision making. The pictures of a chocolate fudge sundae and banana split were used to illustrate how choices must be made. After the students agonized over their decisions, they decided that many times making a decision is not an easy matter. I told the students that the good or service that is given up becomes the opportunity cost. To relate this concept to citizens many years ago, I explained that cotton was the chief cash crop in this area for years; then, cotton farming became the opportunity cost as many farmers took public jobs. An independent activity called "Decision Making" was written for the class. Each student had to make a choice between two comparable goods—ten-speed bike or pony, or an expense-paid trip to Disneyland or one thousand dollars.

3. Economic goals. The goals of growth, justice, and security were emphasized in relationship to personal goals for each youngster. After studying the meaning of these terms, the students set personal goals for the class: be considerate of others, show good sportsmanship, and show respect for the property of others.

Economic growth was studied in relationship to the goods and services available to families, schools, and communities today that were not available fifty years ago. To emphasize this, a retired teacher shared her teaching experiences with the pupils. She said that she started teaching at a rural school during the Great Depression; at that time a school had no cafeteria, indoor plumbing, electric lights, nor playground equipment. She explained that now all the smaller schools in this area have consolidated with Charleston and that schools now have better facilities because of specialization and technology.

A ditto worksheet, "Economic Goals," was developed. In the first part, the students matched a goal to a related phrase, for example, the goal security to the phrase school fire insurance. The second section employed the dictionary skill of matching words to their meanings.

4. Productive resources. The productive resources were explained, and then the resources that were used in making the classroom soup were listed. After a visit to the cafeteria to observe the preparation of soup and after hearing the classic *Stone Soup,* the students enumerated the productive resources of each. Next, the language skill of making a simple outline was taught. The students used the information about productive resources in an outline.

5. Resource extenders. Worksheets explaining specialization and technology were read, discussed, and the questions answered. To emphasize the number of specialists of today, a list was compiled and compared to the careers that were available to the senior citizens. Two additional activities were done in conjunction with specialization. Each student drew and colored a picture that illustrated the caption, "What I Want to Be." A student in dental hygiene demonstrated proper tooth care and explained her training.

To illustrate the advance in technology during the past fifty years, machines used by the senior citizens were listed on the chalkboard, and the students named the present day machine. Some of the comparisons were the hand egg beater to the electric mixer and the crosscut saw to the chain saw. When the senior citizens were young, cotton farming was the main source of income for most families in this community. A senior citizen demonstrated the carding of cotton to the class and explained that the carded fibers were used in making quilts.

A resource person gave a slide presentation of the advance in technology of Charleston since 1874. In addition, Mr. Underwood, the elementary principal, showed the class a manual duplicator and an electric one; he compared the two machines and explained that the electric machine saved the productive resource—labor.

6. Institutions. "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Mr. Vinegar" were used to introduce trading. To illustrate that trading is time-consuming and that the trade may be of unequal value, the youngsters traded coloring sheets, shells, stickers, and trinkets. To illustrate trading in the past, a senior citizen who had operated a country store during the 1930s told the students that the residents years ago traded fryers, eggs, or cream for soda, flour, sugar, or coffee. Worksheets about trading were read and true or false questions answered. In these papers the reading skill of recognizing base words was emphasized.

The trading experience led the class to the study of money. I decided to reward the children with "Bonus Bucks" for doing good work, having acceptable behavior, or returning papers on time. At the end of each nine-week period the students could spend their "Bonus Bucks" for books or magazines. The "Bonus Bucks" were also used to purchase books at an auction. An auctioneer came to the classroom and conducted an auction of books.

7. Circular flow. Visuals were employed to teach this concept. Independently the children drew illustrations on a circular flow chart to represent their families. A worksheet that showed the household spending its money was studied and colored.

Concluding Activities

Two events comprised our concluding activities. The first was a visit to the Senior Citizens' Center. Prior to the visit each student had corresponded with an adopted grandparent. To make the visit educational as well as entertaining, a time line—"Charleston's Economic and Technological Progress"—was written and illustrated. As the narrative was read, segments were presented by the children.

The second concluding activity was a technological museum in the classroom. Over seventy-five consumer and capital goods were displayed and viewed by students, parents, and senior citizens of the community.

Evaluation

To initiate the project, a pretest was given. It was difficult to get the students to work on the test because they were accustomed to being taught a skill and then having an activity; however, when the time arrived for them to take the post-test, they did so willingly and their scores showed significant improvement. Short evaluations were also given throughout the unit.

Another evaluation of the children's learning was the writing of letters to the adopted grandparents and thank-you notes to the resource people. Writing to individuals gave them an incentive for doing their best work, and economics furnished the subject matter.

It was rewarding to hear the students use economic terminology and concepts in their daily living. Following the discussion of economizing, several of the students started conserving by writing on both sides of their paper. Finally, it was enjoyable to observe how the third grade students and the senior citizens had developed a common bond through the study of economics—then and now.

Economics through Literature and Song

A Primary Multigrade Economics Unit

Carol Bloesser
Lincoln Elementary School, Clovis, California

Overview

I taught a class composed of first, second, and third graders. In my classroom, reading, math, language, and spelling were individualized, but social studies and science were taught in a group setting with tasks being assigned according to the ability of the child. This project was a year-long study of nine basic economic concepts. I decided not to add another subject to my already full curriculum but rather to teach economics through literature, song, and social studies. The economic concepts taught were taken from the Clovis Unified DEEP Project and were developed by a committee of teachers funded by Fisher Industries. I also sought to follow the California State Social Studies Framework. The first-grade theme was "People at Home and at School." "People as Members of Groups" was the second-grade theme while the third grade studied "People as Members of Communities."

Learning Activities

The activities developed for each concept were designed for active participation by the students rather than for paper and pencil tasks. A few of the learning tasks are described below along with the concepts they were designed to teach.

1. Wants. The Mother Goose rhyme "Handy Pandy" was read to the class. We discussed what Handy Pandy liked to get at the candy store and the kinds of candy children in the class would pick if they were going to the store with their mothers. "Do you need candy in order to live?" This question created a discussion of what people must have in order to live. We labeled these wants as "basic wants" and the things we want but do not have to have as "other wants." We made Marshmallow Krispie candy, and as we ate, we made lists of our "other wants." We noticed that we did not all want the same thing and that our wants changed from day to day.

On another day we listened to the story "The Gingerbread Man" and discussed what the old man and woman wanted and what all of the animals that chased the Gingerbread Man wanted. Puppets were made to represent the characters in the story; the class then used them to perform a dramatization of the story. Again "other wants" were explored, and the class noticed how endless their wants were. Later in the week the class listened to the record "Cinderella." The children discussed what each member of the family wanted in the story. After working on correct letter form, they wrote letters to their make-believe fairy godmothers to tell her of some of their wants.

From investigating individual and family wants we moved on to investigate community wants. I used the song "We All Live Together" (Youngheart Records, Volume 1), as the lead-in activity. The song emphasizes words such as *state, county, city,* and *neighborhood.* The book *What Is a Community?* and the filmstrip *What Is a City?* provided information on the development of cities and their wants. The terms *urban* and *suburban* were introduced. Newspaper articles about city council discussions on ways to finance new projects gave additional insight into community needs.

2. Productive resources. This concept was introduced with a celebration of Johnny Appleseed Day. The story of Johnny Appleseed was read. We discussed what the apple tree produced, and then the children became producers by cooking applesauce in the classroom. The word *producer* was further emphasized in another lesson with the reading of "A Day At the Farm." All of Farmer Brown's animals were named, and lists were made of the products which they produced. We discussed Farmer Brown's resources and made puppets of them. The students held up their puppets in turn, and said something appropriate to the character the puppet represented. For example, "I am a chicken. I produce eggs for Farmer Brown." The term *capital goods* was introduced with the story "The Emperor's New Clothes." The resources and capital goods needed to produce the emperor's clothing were discussed, and the children again became producers and made collages using resources and capital goods. Using films about the county in which we live, the children learned about the crops produced in our area, such as grapes, citrus fruits, and cotton. Using old county centennial books, we looked at pictures showing means of production in the past. These means were contrasted with current means.

3. **Opportunity cost.** The poem "Animal Growls" by J. J. Thompson led to a discussion of past excursions to the zoo. The children were shown pictures of five entertaining places to visit that are nearby. Children had to pick the place they most wanted to go. They were told that their second choice was their opportunity cost. It was explained that there was a scarcity of time and money; therefore, a choice had to be made. In other lessons similar choices had to be made in the classroom store, in future occupational plans, and in the way communities might spend their money.

4. **Scarcity.** Putting instant vanilla pudding mix and milk in a jar and passing it around the room to be shaken by the children introduced the concept of scarcity. Its meaning was vividly emphasized when there was only enough pudding for twelve children. Planting bean seeds and looking at the plant to decide if one plant would produce enough beans for each child's family further illustrated scarcity. The story "Jack and the Beanstalk" pointed out the shortage of "basic want" food. Looking at books about our early community, the children learned that water was a scarcity and that agriculture did not prosper until the advent of irrigation.

5. **Specialization.** The book *Everyone Has a Job to Do* illustrated the kinds of work each family member does at home. We discussed what would happen if all family members had to fix their own dinners, wash their own clothes, etc. The song "Polly Put the Kettle On" was sung, so that the children could tell the class about their jobs at home. We sang lines such as "Dawn, clean your room; Dawn, clean your room; Dawn, clean your room for it's your job." The Fruit Combo Company was formed to produce nutritious candy. After filling out a job application, each child was given a job on the assembly line. The children soon noted the drawbacks to the assembly line process. A field trip to a local bakery brought further understanding of the meaning of specialization.

6. **Voluntary exchange.** After working on the values of coins and counting money with the first graders, we set up a classroom store. We tried bartering and soon learned how clumsy and awkward it was. Switching to money, we learned about being a good consumer and getting the most possible for our money. The book *Money, Money* provided a good background for our study.

7. **Income distribution.** A salary system was set up in the classroom. The children were paid in bottlecaps for completing work, keeping their desks clean, etc. The bottlecaps could be used as money to purchase pencils, stickers,

and erasers. The children rapidly understood that a job must be performed before money can be earned.

8. Interdependence. The children pantomimed jobs of various community workers. After the children finished, they told the class how that particular worker helped their families. The words *goods* and *services* were used in relation to each worker. The children drew pictures of what they would like to be, and a slide show was made from these pictures. The highlight of this study was a Career Fair at which eight parents spoke about their occupations. They told about the amount of education needed to perform their jobs and the supply and demand for their particular jobs. This especially helped the students understand some of the factors that determine a person's income.

9. Government intervention. Because of the ages of the children, we did not go into welfare benefits, unemployment, etc. Taxation was discussed as a way for the government to get the money it needs to operate. Sales slips were examined to see the amount of state sales tax. Gasoline pumps were checked, and the amount of taxes on gasoline was reported. Blank income tax forms were perused so the children could get some idea of how taxes were figured.

Parent Involvement

The parents were kept informed of our study through articles in each issue of the school newspaper. The study was first explained at Back-To-School Night. Monthly homework projects involving parental help were assigned, and the parents were very enthusiastic about helping their children. One month the project was to go to a supermarket and price pet food. The children had to figure out how much it cost to feed their pets for a month. If they did not have a pet, they used imaginary ones. Parents accompanied us on our field trips to a local bakery, a nearby dam to investigate the county's irrigation system, and the home of an early county resident.

Evaluation

A pretest was given at the beginning of the year, and a post-test was given at the end of the year to assess whether the children had learned more about economics. After each concept was taught, a minitest was also given. The children showed significant improvement on the post-test. On an affective level, enthusiasm was shown throughout the entire study. Part of this enthusiasm came as parents participated by helping with the Career Fair and attending our concluding program.

Conclusion

Our study concluded with an Economics Fair featuring literature and song. Sixty parents, grandparents, and other interested adults came to watch the program. Each concept that we studied was explained and illustrated by a song, poem, or play. Some of the songs used were "If I Were a Rich Man," "Polly Put the Kettle On," and "Whatever Will Be Will Be." The greatest pleasure derived from this study did not come from actual planned lessons. Instead, it came when students could use the economic terms in new situations. These students were not ready for creative financing or a grasp of marginalism, but if their interest in economics continues, they will be one day!

Weathernomics: Second Graders Look at the Economic Impact of Weather

A Second-Grade Unit in Economics

Betty Muench
Fulbright Primary School, Little Rock, Arkansas

Rationale

Arkansans will long remember December 1982. Two storm systems moved through Arkansas that month. Torrential rains followed the twenty-seven tornadoes which struck the state. These storms caused death and destruction throughout Arkansas. The tornado and flood damage in the state was dramatic and was seen on television news programs throughout the country. People have a tendency to look at the sensational aspects of a disaster, but they rarely stop to look at the economic impact this disaster has on the people who were involved.

The children in my class were highly motivated to talk about the tornadoes and floods as they had been affected by power outages and disrupted telephone and cable television service. I decided to capitalize on this interest and to develop a plan of study which would be meaningful to the children and allow them to learn and apply economic concepts as they studied the storms' effects on Arkansas.

There were twenty-five second-grade children in my class, and they ranged in age from seven to nine years. These children were never expected to understand the magnitude of the disaster or to remember all of the information given to them by the resource people. My purpose in pursuing this study was to have the children get a feeling for the economic impact of weather. I believe the children were able to do this because the resource people used slides and videotapes to illustrate the damage they were talking about. The circular flow chart also served as the central reference point throughout this study.

Objectives

My general goals were to help the children acquire an understanding of some basic economic concepts and principles and how they affect our daily lives; to develop the ability to think analytically about economic problems; and to provide the students with the experience of doing an in-depth study of how the weather had affected Arkansas. By doing this, the children were able to see how money, goods, and services flow to various sectors of the economy.

Through group discussions and by drawing pictures, making posters and charts, designing and displaying bulletin boards, writing stories, and taking a pre- and post-test, the children demonstrated an understanding of the following economic concepts:

1. People have unlimited wants for goods and services. The process of satisfying wants is called consumption, and the people whose wants are satisfied are called consumers.
2. Before goods and services can be consumed, they must be produced. Productive resources (human, natural, and manufactured) are necessary for production to occur.
3. There are not enough productive resources to satisfy the wants of the people.
4. Decisions have to be made as to how scarce resources will be used. Opportunity cost refers to what must be given up when decisions are made.
5. An economic system is an organized way to decide what is produced, how to produce, and for whom to produce. In the United States these decisions are made through the interaction of supply and demand as signaled by prices in the marketplace.
6. There are not enough resources to produce all of the goods and services people want. People attempt to extend these resources through specialization and technology.
7. The need for trade develops as people become more interdependent through increased specialization in the production of goods and services.
8. People go into the market to sell their productive services to business in exchange for money income. The public exchanges money income for finished goods and services produced by business, which can then acquire more productive resources to continue the circular flow process.
9. Financial institutions serve many purposes, but the one characteristic that is common to all of them is that they bring together the voluntary savings

of people, pay interest for the use of the money, and in turn channel the money to individuals and businesses that need it at the time.

10. Government influences the allocation of resources because it controls the production of some goods and services and redistributes income among individuals through transfer payments.

11. The government gives financial assistance to disaster victims since economic security is one of our national goals.

12. Situations beyond human control (the weather) influence the decisions we make.

13. People cannot control the weather, but they can lessen the economic impact that it has on their lives.

Plan of Study

John Dewey's philosophy of education was kept in mind as this unit of study was planned. Dewey believed that the subjects taught in school were frequently too far removed from the everyday experiences of children. When this happens, children lose interest in what they are learning. Dewey maintained that interest was an important factor in learning. The tornadoes and floods that had occurred in Arkansas had definitely stimulated the children's interest. I decided that this interest would provide an excellent aid in teaching some economic concepts.

It was necessary to divide our unit of study into the following three phases as the children had to have a basic understanding of economics and weather before they could look at the economic impact of the weather:

Phase I Learning about the Weather
Phase II A Minicourse in Economics
Phase III Looking at the Economic Impact of the Weather

A wide variety of learning activities was used in the hope of reaching each child in the way that individual learned best. Throughout our study, charts, posters, bulletin boards, and booklets were made. Books, newspapers, brochures, films, and filmstrips provided us with a greater understanding of both economics and weather. Resource people were invited into our classroom to share their expertise with us. Two field trips were taken to give the children a greater awareness of the economic impact of the storms and to reveal how our city was involved in tornado preparedness. Each activity enhanced our study and made it more relevant for the children.

Throughout this study I attempted to correlate economics with other subjects in the curriculum. For example: library books, newspapers, and brochures were read (reading); letters were written to every resource person (writing); map skills were learned and productive resources in the state were discussed (geography); terms such as *entrepreneur, technology, specialization,* and *interdependence* were taught (vocabulary development); experiments pertaining to heat, wind, air pressure, and humidity were performed (science); and pictures were drawn (art).

Activities

Phase I – Learning about the weather. During this phase of study the children learned how heat, humidity, wind, and air pressure alter the weather. Science experiments allowed them to observe the characteristics of air. As they studied the water cycle, they learned how clouds are formed and why it rains. Numerous library books were read to and by the children to reinforce these concepts.

Films were shown to the children so that they could learn about tornadoes and floods. These films helped the children see the importance of developing a preparedness plan whether one is at home, school, work, or out shopping. After seeing the films, the children were able to relate what they had learned in the film to what had happened in our state. Handouts were given to the children to reinforce the safety rules they were learning. Our motto became "Warning Saves Lives."

Phase II – A minicourse in economics. After our in-depth study of the weather we began our minicourse on economics. I wanted to help the children feel comfortable with the economic concepts they would be exposed to as we studied the economic impact of the severe weather.

A bulletin board in the classroom showed a hippo playing football. The large football it was kicking named one of the economic topics of our state guide. The smaller footballs contained the terms we were to learn in that topic. After the children learned each term, the small football was placed by the goal. The children enjoyed seeing how many terms they had learned as they went through the following topics in *Economic Education for Arkansas Elementary Schools:*

1. The Problem of Scarcity
2. Productive Resources
3. Economic Analysis
4. Economic Goals
5. Financial Institutions
6. The Circular Flow
7. Resource Extenders
8. Interdependence and Trade
9. The Market Economy of the United States

The economic education television series *Pennywise* was viewed weekly to reinforce the above-mentioned concepts. A bulletin board in the hall outside our classroom was used to display pictures which the children drew for each program.

The children kept a notebook of the economic terms and concepts they were learning. Definitions of the terms were written as the children learned each new word. The booklets were illustrated and poetry was used for reinforcement. Students enjoyed sharing their booklets with resource people who visited our classroom.

Phase III – Looking at the economic impact of the weather. Interest in this aspect of our unit of study had been high since the storms began. I did feel, however, that the children needed to view a videotape of the storm damage before they looked at the economic impact of the severe weather. The Arkansas Office of Emergency Services loaned us the videotapes they used to verify the extent of the storm damage for the federal government.

The videotapes showed plainly that the most widespread damage in our state was caused by flooding. They also allowed the children to see how tornadoes and floods cause different damage. In a tornado, buildings are partially or completely blown away. In a flood, the building may be left standing—although it may no longer be habitable—or it may be washed away.

During this unit of study the children looked at the economic impact of the severe weather. They were too young to understand its impact in terms of the dollar amount of damage; they did not comprehend such large sums of money. Throughout the unit they were told the dollar amounts of damage, but they were never asked to memorize these amounts of money or to work math problems using these amounts. The more advanced children did learn to read the amount when it reached millions of dollars.

Productive resources, interdependence, and the circular flow were the core concepts of this study. For example, productive resources were damaged or destroyed. Once these resources were destroyed, they could not be used again. Interdependence was evident as the storm victims depended on workers to repair the damage, volunteer agencies to house them, insurance companies to pay for the repairs, financial institutions to loan them money, and governmental agencies to provide a variety of services. The circular flow was used to demonstrate interdependence and the overall structure of the economy. This circular flow was kept in mind as we looked at the economic impact of the severe weather on three sectors of the economy—households, business, and government. Financial institutions were included in the circular flow chart as they helped channel the money to business, households, and government. This flow provided the structure for our study. Resource people from each sector of the economy visited our classroom to help the children understand how that sector had been affected by the severe weather.

The children learned through this study that weather affects us all of the time. The only way to keep it from hurting us is to know what it can do to us and then to take the necessary steps or precautions to prevent it from hurting us. People can be prepared for severe weather by taking cover when the tornado sirens go off and by buying insurance so that they will be reimbursed for some or all of any property damage.

Evaluation

Formal evaluation of the children's progress was done by administering the *Primary Test of Economic Understanding* published by the Joint Council on Economic Education. This test was administered on a pre- and post-test basis. The test was read to the children as they marked their answers on a separate answer sheet. The average number of points gained on the test was 11.5.

Information evaluation was used throughout our unit of study to test the progress the children were making in their understanding of the economic concepts being presented to them. This was done through observation, written assignments, and discussion. Listening to the children using economic terms in their everyday vocabulary was evidence of their gain in economic understanding. The questions they asked our resource people also reflected their degree of economic understanding.

I could see how Dewey's philosophy of education enriched this unit of study. Dewey regarded the school as a form of community life, life as real and vital to children as that they carried on in their homes, in their neighborhoods, and on their playgrounds. He believed that the school should take up and continue the activities which children were already familiar with in the home and that the influence of the school should flow into the community. I believe that our study was vital to these children. We began with an event that happened in our city and helped them see how they had been affected by it.

These children gained a better understanding of economics, tornado and flood safety, and the effect of weather. They also learned something about our state and its relationship to the rest of our country: we do not exist by ourselves; we depend on people in other states and in the rest of the world.

Elfenomics: The Story of How Little People Learn Big Business

An Economics Unit for the Second Grade

Jeanette N. Bennett
Wilson Elementary School, Wilson, Arkansas

Rationale

My primary concern as a teacher is to instill in children a desire to learn. I believe that school should be and *must* be an interesting, exciting and motivating place that allows education to be germinal, not terminal. The "little people's" world may seem insignificant to some as a world of play. I contend that it is the most crucial. Ideals, attitudes, and values are formed at this young age. It is urgent to teach more efficiently and effectively because "little people" are very important people.

As twenty-six "lovable, huggable little people" enrolled in my class, I was faced with twenty-six challenges to my teaching philosophy. To meet these challenges, "Elfenomics" was vital. Economics is all around us, and children as well as adults make decisions as consumers, producers, and savers. Teaching economics not only aids involvement in the total learning process, but also provides the groundwork for analytical, rational decision making. It was therefore the intent of this economics project to extend education in two major ways: to teach the basic principles of economics and to incorporate economics into the core curriculum in such a way that other academic subjects would be enhanced. Basic to the project was the goal of having a positive impact upon the future.

Overview

The story "The Elves and the Shoemaker" was chosen as the theme. The children were given a conceptual image of basic economic principles as found in the story and were then challenged to recognize and apply these same concepts when found in various situations other than that of the original learning experience. Role playing and pretending were easily transformed into meaningful activities that were directed toward the attainment of cognitive and affective skills. Motivation and interest were intensified by having the students identify with the characters in the story and become part of it. This ultimately resulted in a greater degree of learning. As the children related to the elves in the story as "little people," a bond was established. Our "little people" society evolved as an effective teaching tool used to secure a rapport with our subject.

Teaching Approach

Basic to the teaching approach was the knowledge that each child has individual instructional needs. Our project was labeled a "seeing, hearing, moving, touching, learning package" in order to comply with the notion that each child has a preferred learning style, be it listening, seeing, or participating in a hands-on experience. The vast differences in the abilities of my students had demonstrated the need for active, goal-directed learning. I applied the steps of economic analysis to this problem and prepared an instructional contract for each child. Each student had a file folder with a sheet divided into twenty blank sections stapled to the outside. Using pencil to allow for changes in individual growth patterns, I wrote individual lesson plans in the spaces. The children were allowed to assist me in planning their assignments. As economics was the hub of our curriculum, contract assignments were linked to that subject. Learning-center games and activities, the typing center, specific reading assignments, art work, and task cards were some of the categories that evolved.

Task cards were especially beneficial to this teaching approach. These were 5" × 8" cards that I made using old workbooks, catalogs, and my imagination as sources for ideas to construct meaningful economic tasks. They were filed in numerical order behind reference divisions that identified the academic areas to be reinforced. Varying degrees of difficulty in the cards allowed all levels of ability to be challenged successfully.

As our economics unit progressed, a system for being paid for the number of successfully completed contract assignments was devised. This became a work record for an income. Each activity was worth one cent in play money; the children were then able to buy from the class Treasure Chest. They were given choices to make as saving and spending became a reality. Work became a most enjoyable facet of our classroom as a result of this style of teaching.

Through the integration of many resource persons, an overall view of the significance of economics in all of our lives was gradually presented. We used the teaching tool of community involvement to initiate, develop, or to conclude specific topics, as dictated by the lesson. A comparison of the concepts found in our basic piece of children's literature with the real world around us improved the quality of education.

Learning Activities

After the story "The Elves and the Shoemaker" was first presented as an enjoyable listening experience, many activities began. A large poster board was cut in the shape of a shoe and placed in the cut-and-paste center, along with an ample supply of catalogs, magazines, and newspapers. Each child was required to place at least one picture of a "want" on the collage and to initial the contribution. The students were told that I would check the collage in three days. It was the children's reponsibility to arrange time in their schedules to carry out this assignment. As a result, more emphasis was placed on individual decision making concerning classwork. It was hoped that a generous amount of praise to those who had made wise decisions concerning their work habits would prompt others to do the same—not because they *had* to, but because they *wanted* to. The children made other, similar giant shoe collages as the unit progressed and placed the collages in the hall under the caption "Little People Step Big Into Economics."

One of the "little people" who aided in our economics project was a famous and popular character. E.T. became important to us for he became known as "Economic Terms." As new "E.T.'s" were introduced, large strips of paper effectively displayed the new terms around a picture of the famous personality.

The world of work was utilized as a way to emphasize economic concepts such as choices, opportunity costs, specialization, the assembly line, and investment in oneself. After comparing the work of the shoemaker and the elves with various other careers, we were able to envision all persons as individuals with a need to make decisions in view of their own personalities. Individual self-worth grew with the understanding that we are all important in our own way. Jobs were created in the classroom for which these ideas could be reinforced.

We became producers of a product as we made play dough. Each child was actively involved in the mixing, measuring, pouring, and reading of the recipe. As accuracy in carrying out these steps was a prerequisite to a successful product, the children recognized the value of a basic education as a determining factor for success. They discovered a rationale for going to school.

Another "I did it myself" activity was made possible by the efforts of several mothers. A sewing center was set up in the hall outside our room where the parents helped the children to produce elf hats, using a capital resource—the sewing machine. The class established a definite identification with the elves by constructing and wearing the hats.

Even music was an important part of "Elfenomics." We wrote words for tunes that were already familiar, and created original tunes for others. A collection of sixteen "Elfenomic Songs" represented joyous moments of creativity and learning.

Our school superintendent, Harvey Barton, brought added dimension to our study as he explained the relevance of wants, wise decisions, and taxes to our immediate setting, the school. The children were given a new appreciation of the school as they were challenged to assume responsibilities that were vital to the school's future as well as to their own futures. This prompted us to learn more about our lunchroom, bookstore, and school office as they related to our study. We learned quickly that economics was a very real part of every facet of our lives.

Our knowledge of natural resources was enhanced as a Tandy Leather Company representative came with leather, leather, and more leather. Importing and exporting were introduced as strange and unfamiliar skins and hides were explained. Each child was given a leather kit for a coin purse. Since we were very unskilled in the production of leather purses, we greatly appreciated the assistance of our principal, Mr. Allen. As the prices of the various leathers were disclosed, we could definitely understand why the shoemaker had a scarcity of money!

Our free enterprise economy became very dear to us as Nancy Balton shared some of her experiences in the Soviet Union. The comparison to the command system emphasized an appreciation of our freedom in America. A most effective lesson in choosing and making decisions was conducted as Ms. Balton gave all the children twenty cents in various combinations of American money and invited them to shop at the "Elves' Sweet Shop." A table was set with countless sweets to choose from, each with a different price. The children were allowed to spend or save as they desired. M & M cookies were the favorite at two cents each. The store clerks were forced to raise the price of these, while other items were offered at sale prices. The children grasped the concept of supply and demand quickly and sweetly!

Films, filmstrips, books, worksheets, and bulletin boards strengthened our study. Newspapers, magazines, and television were utilized. It was surprising how often the mornings in class became a confused, exciting recapitulation of economics in the news. As a result of viewing the television commercial for

Keebler cookies which are "made by elves" the idea as born for a "Cookies by Elves" business.

To provide insight into the idea of establishing a "Cookies by Elves" business, Michael Wilson, president of Lee Wilson & Company, was asked to share information with us concerning the "inside of a cookie." Mr. Wilson introduced a make-believe town, modeled after our own town. Mr. Wilson demonstrated the production of soybeans and wheat with a step-by-step approach. As the farmer began the process by applying for a loan at the bank, the children experienced a relationship to the shoemaker who also needed money for his business. The farmer's steps were traced. Mr. Wilson pointed out the dependence of farmers on various businesses and ended by taking up the harvesting of the soybeans and wheat. Mr. Wilson explained that these crops would be turned into oil and flour, two essential ingredients of a cookie. From this angle, the students understood that interdependence was necessary—even to the making of a single cookie.

Concluding Activities

Before "Cookies by Elves" could become a reality, much planning and work was required to form our corporation. We had to use economic analysis as we faced problems such as renting capital resources, pricing our product, etc. We were a triumphant group as we paraded to the Bank of Wilson to repay a $10.00 loan plus the interest due of 20 cents. In the minds of my "little people," the large, worn brown envelope contained a small fortune. As the note was stamped "Paid in Full," success was realized. The sincerity and earnestness of the children in this business venture would prevent me from disclosing what Mr. Bill Payne, vice president of the bank, and I knew. The loan had been a fake and the children had actually borrowed their money from their teacher.

Our second activity was rewriting "The Elves and the Shoemaker" as an economic play and presenting this production to our school and the children's parents. The scarcity of time made division of labor inevitable. Without the joint effort of the students, parents, other relatives, and friends, this could not have been possible. As the students and I worked together to create the play, responsibility was shown as the children revised their parts to their liking. I was amazed to hear speaking parts somewhat different from that in the script and surprised when the parts were memorized with no insistence. I was almost a believer in "magic elves" as I witnessed the care, pride, and understanding that were exhibited.

Evaluations and Conclusions

The *Primary Test of Economic Understanding* was administered as a pretest and a post-test, with remarkable achievement shown. Other teacher-made quizzes were given periodically and used for instructional direction. The major evaluations were based upon the application of the principles of economics in day-to-day activities. The awareness and concern of the children in their total environment was the most decisive factor. As parental comments were frequent concerning the achievement of the students, so were observations made by resource persons.

One of our most honored speakers was the president of Arkansas State University, Ray Thorton. As he offered his congratulations to the children for their study of economics and talked to them about investing in themselves to prepare for the future, the children eagerly shared their newfound knowledge with him. A confident group of "little people" must have been evaluated by this university president. In a private conversation afterwards, Mr. Thorton inquired as to the ability level of my class. He had assumed that this must have been a select group of gifted children.

It would be my conclusion that the smiles on little faces, the sparkle in little eyes, and the eagerness in attitudes were truly the evaluation of "Elfenomics." Teaching economics to "little people" was in every way "big business."

GOOD IDEAS IN BRIEF: PRIMARY LEVEL

COLLEEN JONES, JAN KESSLER, and CAROL SHURR, *Barling Elementary School, Barling, Arkansas,* worked together to develop a nine-week course in economics for their third-grade classes. They created ECONO-MAN, a fuzzy, green puppet with a big, purple "E" on his shirt. The lovable character introduced economic concepts to the classes with puppet shows. ECONO-MAN developed relationships with new friends who assisted him in teaching. A few of his friends were a dog (wants), a police officer (services), a rabbit (production), two frogs (interdependence), and a computer (technology). Teachers and classes constructed a theater, made puppets, and wrote and taped scripts. To end the unit the classes established a puppeteer company which performed in the surrounding community. Three puppet troupes gave their performances to three receptive audiences. They performed for a varied age group—young to old.

PAM BYRD and SANDY PFEUFFER, *Tilles Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* taught economic concepts to their first-grade students in a study entitled "Children Are People Who Need Economic Education." This in-depth study began when the children wrote a poem they named "Children Are People, Too." Each stanza was used to introduce economic concepts in their unit. The first-grade students learned that children are people who consume goods and services, produce goods and services, depend on other people, have economic goals, and make economic decisions. The economic concepts and generalizations incorporated into the unit were taught using a variety of techniques. Some of the different techniques used to introduce or reinforce economic concepts taught in this unit were field trips, role-playing exercises, collages, charts, puppets, games, activity sheets, bulletin boards, and learning centers. The teachers used many hands-on activities to teach economics, because they felt that first-grade children would gain the most understanding by being directly involved. The opening of Tilles National Bank gave the children some experiences with money and banking. The teachers posted a chart that listed work the children could do to earn "money chips" which were used to purchase certain classroom activities. They had to deposit their earnings and write checks to buy these activities. A policeman was invited to visit the classroom. The children learned many ways they could depend on the police to serve and to protect them. They also learned that tax money is used to pay for this service. The children noticed the absence of school crossing signs around Tilles Elementary School. Solving this problem led the children into the decision-making process. The children chose the "best solution" and wrote a letter to the city government about their problem. It took only a week for the children to receive a reply and new school signs. The concluding activity was a play which adapted a poem the children had used throughout the unit.

JEAN ANTHONY, a teacher at *Echols Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* developed a unit with first-grade students called "E.T.'s Survival Kit." The group pretended that the lovable creature from outer space returned to live with one of their classmates. To survive on earth, he would need to know about our economic system. The class then taught E.T. the basic economic facts he needed. Each of the five major objectives was introduced with a filmstrip and a chart: (1) America's Strengths, (2) The Meaning of a Family, (3) Why We Work Outside the Home, (4) How We Spend Our Money, and (5) The Importance of Choices. The class discussed each topic, and then the children wrote the story in their economic storybooks. When finished, the storybooks included most of the basic economic concepts. Each child also compiled a dictionary of economic terms used in the project. The school's media center had a good supply of filmstrips and tapes on primary economics. These were used daily. The teacher correlated these activities with other subjects such as art, drama, science, and math whenever possible. E.T. was present for all discussions and activities. In fact, a parent made an E.T. costume, so he was in character. The class made small flash cards and put those ideas that were essential to economic survival into small bags or kits. These were presented to E.T. at the end of the study. Each child as well had a kit for economic survival in today's world.

ELAINE COULSON, a teacher in the *Ladue School District, a suburb of St. Louis,* developed a twelve-week simulation for third-graders. The simulation began as students made collages of wants from a store catalog. Through this experience students learned about unlimited wants, limited resources, scarcity, decision making, and opportunity cost. Each student decided upon one item costing between $5 and $7 to buy at the end of the unit. This served as the motivation for the rest of the simulation as students became part of the world of work. By opening the 3C Service Agency, students learned about producing services, advertising, costs, and banking procedures. Students determined what services they were capable of selling, set prices, borrowed money for advertising, and developed and printed ads for their agency. As they earned an income, they each deposited their money in the 3C Bank and earned interest. Although most students earned a respectable income selling services to parents during the five weeks in which the agency operated, most students needed to earn more money. They felt another business would help them achieve their goal of buying their chosen collage item sooner. The 3C Factories were created. Students decided what to produce and how to produce items such as bookmarks, stationery, and stick pins. They learned about the factors of production, costs, productivity, markets, and profit as they became both workers and owners. The 3C Bank lent money needed to begin the new business. After two weeks, 46 workers produced 1,500 items. Costs were determined and prices set. Items were sold to parents, teachers, and students. Although a handsome profit was made by all, students learned the importance of prices as they studied the relationship between surpluses, shortages, and prices. Finally, students withdrew money from savings, received interest, and were paid wages from the factories as well as a share of the profit from the store. Now each decided whether to buy his original want, to buy another want, or to save his money for future use. About two-thirds decided to save their money, saying that the whole experience had taught them to be more careful about making decisions and to be more aware of the opportunity cost.

LISA WATKINS, second-grade teacher at the *Louisville Collegiate School, Louisville, Kentucky,* developed "A Visit to Oikonomus" as a two-week unit in economics. At the heart of this unit was an original story. The teacher invited the students to take the role of a teacher and to arrive at and to explain sound economic decisions by drawing from their seven or eight years of life experience. In the story, the students found themselves on a fantasy voyage to the planet Oikonomus and to an Oikonome family whose bakery was run without economic understanding, but had potential. In each episode, the students, whose adoptive family was confronted with an economic dilemma, were required to offer a solution with the help of their classmates.

To promote interest, the tale was written in Lewis Carroll style and was intended to be read to the students with dramatic flare. To generate involvement, it was presented in second person narrative so that each student became the main character of the story. Thus, the students were required to "teach" the Oikonomes the fundamentals of economics, thereby clarifying their own general knowledge of the subject. Through these episodes and related activities the students were actively involved in learning the following concepts: bartering and currency, supply and demand, labor and resources, specialization of labor, opportunity cost, goods and services, wants, and cost, price, and profit. Because of their involvement on Oikonomus, each student was made manager of "Chom's Bakery" and produced "Chocolate Chomlates" for sale to their schoolmates, thus reaping the rewards of sound economic decision making.

REBECCA S. SHEPHERD, a Primary I teacher at *The Collegiate Schools in Richmond, Virginia,* developed a unit of economic study for six-year-old students. The careful arrangement of these activities allowed the first graders to begin with simple concepts and move toward more complicated projects that required a greater understanding of economic principles. "My Treasure" helped the children realize that things have value depending upon a person's needs and wants. "Spending Money Wisely" taught the students that they cannot buy everything they want and thus they must make careful choices. "Barter Day" extended the concepts already introduced by teaching that people can trade things without using money. Through the "Hot Chocolate Factory" the students had the experience of forming a company and producing and selling a product. They were able to begin this business by borrowing $12.00 from a bank. Later in the year a corporation was formed by selling stock in their business, the "Cougar Calendar Company." This unique summer calendar of creative experiences originated to meet the needs of students and families. Many students expressed frustration in regard to being overscheduled during vacation time. Their calendar suggested ways the students could creatively relax in the summer. Starting a business such as a dog-care service, plant-sitting service, and a summer theater were recommended. Interesting ways to explore one's neighborhood and to celebrate the Fourth of July were also suggested. The company sponsored a "Design Your Own Sticker" contest. Purchasers of the calendar received a free page of assorted stickers, including a blank sticker which could be designed and entered in the contest. The winner received a $10 gift certificate from a store specializing in stickers. A high point came when the class was invited to the governor's office to present him with a calendar and make him an honorary shareholder. The profits from this corporation were used to create "The Cougar's Cache," a lending firm. This firm held a fund from which other classes at Collegiate could borrow to begin a business. After reading "The Little Red Hen," the students agreed that hard work pays off. Each activity was a small "sip of economics" that came from a full, satisfying cup.

DEBBIE ARMENTROUT, a kindergarten teacher in *Pleasant Valley Elementary School, Harrisonburg, Virginia,* developed an economics unit after seeing a problem which involved the need to present a variety of snack foods to children. Snacks were prepared by the cafeteria staff and often consisted of items such as crackers, cheese, cereal, fruit, or commercially prepared cookies, with milk or juice to drink. The snacks cost 20 cents per day. They were nutritious but often the selection was not varied or appealing. The children were becoming tired of being offered the same foods each day—many were not touching their snack food. The teacher presented a unit of study that proposed providing more interesting, palatable snacks, possibly at lower prices than the cafeteria would be able to provide. Through this idea, she presented a multidisciplinary unit ("Money Magic") that introduced dental health, nutrition, the grocery store, school helpers and their tools, and some basic concepts about Oriental culture, while interweaving basic economic principles and topics such as saving, consumers, products, division of labor, cooperation, money value (pennies, nickels, and dimes), prices, scarcity, comparative shopping, profit, capital, trade-offs, and capital loan. The concepts of any other culture could substitute for those relating to Oriental culture. The teacher included this topic because schools were now educating larger numbers of Vietnamese or other Asiatic children. She felt it would be valuable in expediting initial positive relationships and in helping children from basically rural areas become more tolerant and accepting of those who are different.

BECKY IVEY and RITA GRAHAM of the *T. G. Smith Elementary School, Fayetteville, Arkansas,* developed "Wants and Needs and Appleseeds," an eight-week study of economics for their third-grade students. Pupils developed a basic understanding of economic concepts while studying apple production, an important agricultural business in northwest Arkansas. In this interdisciplinary unit, the teachers incorporated science, social studies, reading, language, creative writing, art, math, and, of course, economics. The students learned about the production of an apple, how it is picked, packed, shipped, and sold, and also how it is consumed. They became entrepreneurs and developed a business based on the joys of apple consumption. They developed a want by advertising their delicious product, caramel apples. Everyone (parents, teacher, and students) enjoyed this economic project. The students provided the needed services while learning about specialization and division of labor. Apples were used to teach the basic economic concepts. Students studied the important service that bees provide by pollinating apples. They also visited Apple Town to see large-scale apple production. The concluding activity was a PTA program presented for the parents so that they would understand the classes' study of economics.

CHAPTER TWO

Rags to Riches: The Story of White Hall Schools

An Economics Unit for the Sixth Grade

Glenda Nugent
Ida Mae Gandy Elementary School, Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Introduction and Goals

"Rags to Riches: The Story of White Hall Schools" began as a nine-week unit of study to investigate the economic aspects of education; however, as student interest soared during the first nine weeks, our project stretched into a full semester. Ida Mae Gandy Elementary School is the newest school in a small Arkansas school district that has gone from the fifth poorest in the state to the fifth wealthiest in just a few years, due to the construction of a coal-fired steam electric generating station within our school district boundaries. The problem of poor school facilities was compounded when the school population more than doubled during a twelve-year period from 1966 to 1978. My sixth graders who had always attended White Hall Schools remembered attending school in classrooms designed for one class, but containing two classes and two teachers. Increased tax revenue from the power plant construction allowed the school district to begin a building program to relieve the crowded conditions.

Students were aware of the differences in their school environment now and when they were younger. They began to question the differences. Through guided inquiry, we did research to find answers to many questions. Students assumed the roles of investigative reporters and conducted their research by writing letters, interviewing resource people, taking field trips, reading, viewing films and filmstrips, playing economic games, and reading the daily newspaper. At the outset of the study, I asked each child to help with at least one group or individual project, yet nearly every child had so many ideas for sharing the results of the research that my room was virtually covered with maps, graphs, posters, bulletin boards, and games. Media groups prepared four filmstrips, and everyone worked together to prepare an economic newspaper and a slide presentation.

The goals of the "Rags to Riches" study were for the students to gain an understanding of basic economic principles by relating them to their daily lives in school and to develop an awareness and appreciation of their school system and the educational opportunities available to them. While working toward these goals, students developed skills in decision making, group participation, public speaking, interviewing, and reporting.

I incorporated Benjamin Bloom's five levels of thinking skills into the unit as we progressed from learning basic economic facts to summarizing and explaining information received, using the information in simulated situations, analyzing our own school district's economic situation and comparing it with other school districts, creating a slide presentation and filmstrips, and finally evaluating our own economic study. The students' enthusiastic response to the project allowed me to teach at these higher levels.

Plan of Study

Our study began in February, just after the state legislature convened for 1983. This allowed the class to monitor decisions made in the general session that would affect our schools. The lower courts had recently declared Arkansas' school fund distribution formula unconstitutional, and a redistribution of state aid to schools that did not have the local wealth of the White Hall District would dramatically affect our school.

To begin our study we listed many questions about our school and its finances and sorted the questions into three main inquiries:

- Where do schools get their funds?
- Who decides how funds are spent?
- What must be purchased with school funds?

How could we answer our questions? One of my students came up with the simple answer, "Ask!" We did this by choosing experts in different aspects of school finance and writing letters to them containing questions drawn from our study. Our correspondents included school administrators, members of congress, senators, and others we felt could aid us in our search for answers. Replies were shared with classmates and posted on a "Mail Bag" bulletin board.

Our state's primary newspaper, *The Arkansas Gazette,* became a tool for monitoring legislative activity as students received daily issues and searched them for legislative and economic news. Pertinent information was posted on a "Legislative News" bulletin board. Students also used the papers for language and math activities. The papers later became both models and inspiration for our own economic newspaper.

Two economic centers were designed by students and used during the unit. One held reading material while the other contained economic games and activities. After using commercial and teacher-made materials in the centers, several groups of students designed their own economic games to reinforce the concepts we studied. Holly and Shannon dubbed this area the "Economic En-Rich-Ment" area because anyone using it would become rich in economic knowledge.

The film *We Want Goods and Services* introduced a discussion of the productive factors necessary for education. Students made charts and listed, graphed, or illustrated all land, labor, and capital goods they could relate to school. When investigating labor, students were surprised at the number of employees necessary for the operation of Gandy School. Our journalists selected school workers to interview and questioned them about specialization and interdependence. The students learned that specialization increased efficiency and that interdependence was vital to each job. The discussion of capital goods resulted in long lists which we further categorized into durable and nondurable goods. Research of our biggest capital good, the school building, resulted in sketches of the structure and the knowledge that this resource had cost $1.4 million to build.

Several community members participated in the project. Our first guest, Julius Brown, who has been superintendent of White Hall Schools for seventeen years, gave the students details of the school district's budget and the rise in revenue available for the schools. Mr. Brown explained how assessed property values, rising from $7.9 million in 1974 to $105.0 million in 1982, allowed the district to replace dilapidated buildings and relieve overcrowding. District budget figures showed that $1,898 per year was spent per child. Tim and Shannon used this information to calculate the cost of educating each student per day and then displayed their information on a colorful bulletin board.

W. F. Moody, a former mayor of White Hall who had been instrumental in encouraging White Bluff to locate in our area, told of its economic impact on the city of White Hall. His account of White Hall's history inspired a media group to produce a filmstrip, *White Hall: Its Growth and Development.*

Our next expert was Lawrence Fratesi, the county tax assessor, who taught students how to figure the assessed value of real and personal property and how to determine taxes due by multiplying real value by 20 percent to get assessed value, then multiplying the assessed value by the millage rate.

After hearing these experts and reading letters from our correspondents, students compiled their information and produced another filmstrip, *Education: Who Pays?*

After monitoring legislative activity and hearing experts explain tax collection, we journeyed to the state capitol to see our lawmakers in action. On the day of our visit, House debate centered on a school finance bill, making the trip especially meaningful for us. We also went to the source of our "riches," the White Bluff Steam Electric Generating Station. A classroom demonstration by Arkansas Power and Light representative Teri Franks prepared us for this trip. She told us economic facts about White Bluff and demonstrated how a coal-fired plant operates. Arkansas Power and Light Company also supplied us with a "Power Energy Education" program that supplemented the energy study students were doing with thier science teacher, Cynthia Purnell. Our visit to White Bluff left us in awe of the size of the capital goods and acres of natural resources (coal) necessary to produce electricity.

Because schools do earn some money from interest on deposits, two bankers were called in to help at this time. Thankful McFall, from the National

Bank of Commerce, brought the film *It's All Mine* and explained how banks are able to pay interest. Robert Gantt of Simmons First National Bank later demonstrated how banks figure interest due on loans and told us about the organization of a new bank from entrepreneurship through profits.

Now that we had learned how taxes are collected and from whom, we further investigated the allocation of funds available to our school. Persons responsible for allocation ranged from teachers to administrators and school board members. Wanting to start this part of our search at the top, we began by inviting our school board president, Gene Whelchel, who told us the procedure used by the board when making funding decisions. He also extended to us an invitation to attend the next school board meeting. We jumped at that chance, and forty students with their two teachers became an attentive addition to the March meeting.

Since teachers are responsible for allocating funds for classroom supplies, I allowed my students to form groups and decide how to spend $100 of my classroom supply allowance. They used the five-step decision-making process to select needs for the class. They completed requisition forms and made suggestions that I used to make my actual classroom order.

Our early correspondence had included letters to two political cartoonists, Roger Harvell of the *Pine Bluff Commercial* and George Fisher of the *Arkansas Gazette*. Our questions about economic issues in political cartoons brought informative answers which included Mr. Fisher's offer to publish a cartoon for us about school finance (students converged on me as I entered school the day this cartoon appeared in the *Gazette*) and Mr. Harvell's offer to demonstrate cartooning to our class. He left us with an understanding of his craft and an idea of how economic news affects his cartoons as well as a cartoon for our own newspaper and an autographed copy of his cartoon book. We concluded our study of political cartoons by drawing our own cartoons about the school finance issue.

Our last guest was James Wooten, chairman of the Arkansas State Council on Economic Education and president of the Arkansas Petroleum Company, who was also the chairman of the State Commission on Public Elementary and Secondary School Finance. This commission was formed to make recommendations for a new funding formula after the courts ruled the old one unconstitutional. As he had already sent his class correspondent the committee's recommendations, we were ready with our opinions about his plan which would cut state aid to the White Hall School District and force it to rely on local property tax collections for revenue. Although we agreed with Mr. Wooten that it was not fair for some Arkansas schools to have only $1,000 per student while others had as much as $3,000, students presented convincing arguments why White Hall could not afford to lose state aid. Mr. Wooten stated that he wished others he had spoken to about the proposed distribution formula were as well informed about school finance as was my group of sixth graders. He praised them for their hard work which was evident from their intelligent questions and proposals.

Conclusion

The class shared the results of our study by printing an economic newspaper and producing a slide presentation. Both became learning experiences as the students used the decision-making process many times when a question arose about the best way to print the paper or to arrange the slides which I had taken throughout the project. The newspaper was compiled from reports each student was required to write after each visit or field trip as well as from editorial opinions and cartoons and from economic word games devised by students. We chose the name *Gandy News Express* after a lively class discussion that could only be settled by drawing a decision-making grid and weighing the advantages of several suggested names. We studied supply and demand with the aid of *Trade-Off* programs and took a survey to determine the number of papers we would need to print. An assembly line was used to collate the pages. Papers were distributed to Gandy School students, and each sixth grader proudly shared a copy with family and friends.

The slide presentation was a cooperative effort; the students drew up an outline, selected appropriate pictures, and wrote the script. With assistance from the music teacher, Shelley Orton, the class produced a slide program complete with background music and an original introduction, "Swingin' at Gandy," which students performed before the slide presentation. Gandy students, parents, teachers, and all resource persons were invited to see the product of the children's weeks of work. The class and I were satisfied that our original questions had been answered and we wanted to share our new-found economic knowledge. We knew we had a hit, not only from the enthusiastic response of our audience that day but also from several invitations that came for me to take our program to other groups.

Evaluation and Conclusion

The *Basic Economics Test* was administered on a pre- and post-test basis, with the post-test scores showing a significant improvement. Objective teacher-made tests were also used for evaluation during the study. Students used charts, filmstrips, posters, and bulletin boards to display the results of their research, and these products provided a means of evaluation. Students compiled notebooks containing brief summaries of each resource visitor, excursion, or film; economic definitions and facts; worksheets; and other materials collected during our study. The most revealing evaluative technique was class discussion and teacher observation. Almost every speaker who came to our classroom commented on the economic knowledge revealed by students' questions and comments.

As students gained economic understanding of our school and community, they began to show an appreciation of their school and the education available to them. Response from parents, administrators, and community members was overwhelmingly positive. Parents felt their children were challenged by the work, yet all students were able to make valuable contributions to group projects. So many school workers and community members offered their services as resource speakers that time ran out before we could use each speaker. Students' self-evaluations demonstrated that they felt they had really learned something worthwhile. While participating in an opinion survey conducted by a graduate student, 96 percent of my sixth-grade students agreed that school prepared them for "real life," as compared to sixty percent and sixty-five percent agreement from groups who had not participated in the study.

This economic project has been one of the most successful learning experiences that I have ever shared with my students. I feel the real value in it has been the change accomplished in student values and attitudes. As George said in his evaluation of our study, "Learning economics is like riding a bike. I will never forget it."

The Economic Impact of Pets on Our Society

A Fifth-Grade Economics Unit

Nancy Braden
Barling Elementary School, Barling, Arkansas

Introduction

My twenty-five fifth graders had a wide range of abilities. Three had learning disabilities, and seven were extremely bright and eager to learn. The other students fell at various levels between the two extremes. They were from low to middle socioeconomic families. This group of students came to my class with two things in common. They were anxious to know what kind of economics study we would do during the school year. They had heard about our economics units from my former students, several of whom were older brothers and sisters of these students. They also had an interest in pets, as do I. We decided to combine interest in economics and interest in pets with "The Economic Impact of Pets on Our Society."

Start-Up Activities

A survey taken in our class showed that 24 of the 25 students owned at least one pet. The one child who did not have a pet had previously owned one.

The survey showed ownership of 16 cats, 28 dogs, and 12 other pets—a total of 56 pets.

We decided to go a step further and survey the entire school. In this survey we found that 592 pets were owned by our school population of 425 students. We found dogs and cats to be the most numerous, with dogs numbering 380 and cats 122. The survey revealed that 90 other kinds of pets were also owned by the students.

We had several discussions about where we spend money on goods and services for pets. Randy's mother brought us a magazine article from *Family Circle* (September 1982) entitled "Do You Really Want a Pet?" One section of the article dealt with the owner's ability to afford a pet. Many expenses were brought out, and the students thought of other expenses themselves. We classified the expenses into the following categories: manufacturing of pet food, sales of pet products, and medical care for pets. We chose to divide the body of the project into these three classifications.

We listed all the local resources where we might possibly get information. The list included pet shops, veterinarians, a local manufacturer of pet food, a retail supermarket that sells pet food and pet products, a pet shop, and the humane society. Together the students and I composed a letter that could be sent to producers of pet food and other sources. After sending the letters we received information from Purina, Kal Kan, Alpo, Pet Food Institute, American Veterinary Medical Association, and the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine.

Summary of Economic Units and Activities

Manufacturing of pet food. I made arrangements to take the students to the Bailes Best Made Dog Food plant, a local pet food manufacturer. However, first Lawrence Devero, Whirlpool Corporation, visited us and gave the students information that applies to any industry. In talking with us, Mr. Devero covered topics such as unions, wages, profits, and stocks. Following his speech, we also studied the manufacturing end of the economy by viewing several filmstrips: *Business Organization, Our Private Capital, Profit Motive, Competition, The Role of Government,* and *Labor Unions.* After each filmstrip the students completed worksheets, made charts, and did research to reinforce the concepts taught.

When I felt the students were ready, we visited the pet food plant. I helped the students prepare a questionnaire for Ms. Bailes, the entrepreneur. At the plant, the students were to look for examples of private ownership, consumer demand, competition, profit motive, government influence, and the results of stable government. We also wanted to know the impact this industry had on our economy.

When we arrived, Ms. Bailes took us on a tour of the plant, talked to the students, and answered their questions. She told us the plant started 25 years ago with an investment of $50,000. She and her husband chose Fort Smith as a location because the freight price was good for supplies coming in and for finished products being shipped out. It is a family-held corporation in which she owns the controlling stock. The company produces dog and cat food.

Soybeans, corn, wheat, meat, and bone are used in making the food. They are transported from all over the United States. Capital resources we saw included sophisticated equipment, buildings, and trucks. Thirteen people were then employed at the plant.

We also learned that the pet food industry depends on farmers for most of the ingredients of pet food. The industry depends on outside transportation to deliver their raw materials, even though they have their own trucks for transporting the finished product.

The company is regulated by government in several ways. It must meet both state and federal standards for plant operations. It is also subject to federal wage guidelines.

The students left Bailes Best Made Dog Food industry with a better understanding of the economics they had been learning and a five-pound bag of dog food each. One student commented that this was a good way to advertise.

This trip was an excellent learning experience, as was evidenced by the letters to Ms. Bailes. Students thanked her for taking time to talk with them and told her all they had learned on the trip. I also used the trip in another English lesson in which the students outlined the whole trip on the board. The students were so excited about the Bailes Best Made Dog Food industry that they talked about it constantly. As I listened to them, I could hear evidence of their knowledge of the market economy, so I helped them organize their knowledge. They divided into groups and prepared a bulletin board showing the market's characteristics, using Bailes as an example.

Next, we received information from Allen Products Company, maker of Alpo Pet Food. The *Story of Alpo* traced the company from the beginning in 1936 in a rented garage to the present-day corporation. I wanted to see if the students could recognize the characteristics of the market economy that they had so easily pointed out after the trip to Bailes. This was a reinforcement, as well as an evaluation technique. I divided the students into groups, assigning each group one characteristic to look for and report about.

We then received information from Ralston Purina Corporation, Kal Kan Corporation, and the Pet Food Institute. I prepared independent tasks from each of these sources of information. The purpose of the tasks was to give the students an opportunity to apply the economics learned in previous activities. The tasks began with the simple and advanced to the more complex. Some examples of the tasks are as follows:

PURINA

- What is the total capital investment for 1982? What is the investment for grocery products? Explain what capital investment means and why it is necessary.
- What kind of effect did inflation have on the demand for pet food?

KAL KAN

- Why did Mr. Hirsch decide to produce pet food?
- What two major events happened to the company during World War II?

PET FOOD INSTITUTE

- How does the American farmer depend on the pet food industry?
- What changes have taken place in the U.S. economy since World War II that have increased pet ownership?

Retail sales of pet products. The students needed to learn their own role in the decision-making process of our economy. I asked them to define a market because that's where the decision are made. Most of them named various supermarkets. I picked up a pet toy and offered it to a child for 5 cents. He gave me the 5 cents, and I gave him the toy. Upon completion of this transaction, I told him we had created a market. The students looked surprised, but I asked what two things had occurred. From that simple exercise they could see that a market is a situation in which buying and selling take place.

The concepts of supply and demand were introduced through transparencies and worksheets from *Basic U.S. Economic Concepts*. The *Trade-Offs* lesson "To Buy or Not to Buy" helped the students see the factors that influence the consumer's demand for a product. We used flea collars as an example of the demand changing due to outside influences. Some students said that lowering the price of flea powder might create less demand for the collars. On the other hand, some said that a mild winter might increase the demand for flea collars, as the fleas wouldn't be killed by extreme cold weather.

The next *Trade-Offs* lesson, "To Sell or Not to Sell," was about the supply side. In this lesson the students saw the flip side of the coin as they watched the factors that affect the amount business people are willing to sell at different prices. We used pet sweaters to take a closer look at the supply side changes. As the students put themselves in the place of the producer, they found it easier to understand why producers are not willing to produce a product for a low price. They considered knitting a sweater for a small dog. The cost of the materials might be $2.00. They thought they would need to receive at least $10.00 to make it worth their while to produce the sweater. They immediately realized that the more they were paid for the sweaters, the more sweaters they would be willing to supply.

The *Trade-Offs* lesson "At What Price" reinforced understanding of the equilibrium or market-clearing price. Before we saw the program, we discussed the cause and effect of the situations in which a surplus or a shortage occurred. For example, if Wee Pals Pet Shop had a surplus of dog houses priced at $50.00, the students decided the business would probably have to lower the price in order to sell the houses. On the other hand, a shortage of the dog houses, they decided, would probably cause prices to go up. The lesson showed several examples of price changes due either to a surplus or a shortage of the product. As the students watched the lesson, they thought of pet supplies.

The final *Trade-Offs* program in this series of four closely related lessons, "How Could That Be," showed the interdependence of market prices. In this lesson a singer's success had an influence on hamburgers and football helmets. After viewing the lesson, we decided to apply those concepts to the pet products. One student said an increase in long-haired dogs could cause an increase in the demand for plastic in order to make brushes for the long-haired dogs. Another used an example of an increase in cats causing an increase in carpet used for scratching posts. Finally, when local independent truckers went on strike, the students became concerned that the strike might cause the price of pet products to go up. They said the raw materials—like the finished product—might be transported by truck.

I felt the students were ready for some real examples of what they had been learning about. Most of their parents shopped at a large supermarket, Harps, which had many pet products for sale, such as food, toys, and most other products that a pet owner would be interested in buying. I decided to ask Robert Yehling, the manager of Harps, to speak to the students.

We had some discussion concerning the information we hoped to gain from Mr. Yehling. We classified the information we needed to know into two categories. First, we wanted to learn some general economics about Harps. Secondly, we wanted to know the economics pertaining to pet food and pet products sold at Harps. We prepared the following questions for Mr. Yehling:

1. How was the location selected?
2. Is your business a corporation, a partnership, or proprietorship?
3. How does it help the area?
4. How many people work at Harps? Are there any seasonal workers?
5. How do you decide wages and salaries?
6. What other benefits do the workers have?
7. Do you invest profits back into the business?
8. Where did you get the money to start this store?
9. What government rules and regulations do you have to follow?
10. How do you decide prices?
11. What kinds of pet products do you sell?
12. What is the volume of sales of pet products?
13. Do you sell more cat or more dog food?
14. Do you sell more dry or more canned food?
15. How do you decide which pet products to sell in your store?
16. Do you sell as much pet products during times of recession as you do when the economy is in good shape?

Mr. Yehling had said Harps required financing, and this led to an interest in financial institutions. The students wanted a resource person from a financial institution to come. The *Trade-Offs* lesson "Why Money?" was used to provide a background for the study of financial institutions first. I asked

J. B. Turner from Merchants National Bank to come. Mr. Turner's visit caused the students to be more aware of all financial institutions. They began bringing in newspaper advertisements from the local banks and savings and loan companies. Most of them were advertising their various savings plans such as money market plans and certificates of deposit. The students displayed several of these advertisements on a bulletin board.

Medical care for pets. This phase began with a visit from a veterinarian. Dr. Jackson explained why he chose his vocation and revealed the amount of capital investment required to start a practice. He explained the many government regulations that a veterinarian has to meet. He said Arkansas is stricter than most states. Dr. Jackson told the students of his income and expenses. He had gathered information for income tax purposes and shared it with us. The students later graphed this information.

After Dr. Jackson's presentation the students divided into groups to do research using materials provided by the American Veterinary Medical Association. *Group I* found that American consumers spent $1.6 billion on veterinarians' services in 1981. They also found that the multiplier effect was a great influence in our economy. They made a circular flow chart using their information. *Group II* found the expenses and the sources of income for a veterinary college. They made graphs to show their findings. *Group III* stressed interesting facts concerning dental services offered by veterinarians. (They were impressed by the information that dogs can be fitted with braces.) Veterinarians are now specializing in dental work and that requires additional investment in human resources. *Group IV*'s report consisted of the two sides of an issue concerning the exemption of veterinarians from FTC rulings. They gave the viewpoints of senators on opposing sides.

This phase ended with a visit from a representative of the Sebastian County Humane Society, another provider of services for pets. She gave us information on the major expenses of the humane society and its income. The students were surprised to learn that no tax money was available to the humane society.

Concluding Activity

At the beginning of the year the PTA asked us to have a program about economics. We used the problem-solving model to make a decision about the type of program to have. Once we decided to write a play, it didn't take long. All of the resource people were written into it.

Evaluation

Formal evaluation of the students' progress was done by administering the *Basic Economics Test,* published by the Joint Council on Economic Education. Form A was given as a pretest and Form B was given as a post-test. An average of 9.4 points were gained.

Informal evaluation occurred throughout the study. The students' letters to resource people served as an excellent basis for evaluation. Other written assignments, discussions, and observations also served the purpose. When I put together a scrapbook of the students' work, I was amazed at the improvements in their work at the end of the year compared to the beginning. The students, too, were amazed at themselves!

What Makes the Schoolbell Ring?

A Fifth-Grade Unit for Economics

Stanley Wells
Echols Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Introduction and Objectives

Echols Elementary School is one of twenty-one neighborhood schools in the Fort Smith school system. The students who attend Echols come from middle to upper-income homes. The school has nine self-contained classrooms, a special education room, a music room, and a media center. The school's enrollment is approximately 215. Thirty-five fifth graders were involved in this unit of study.

In 1981–82 my fifth-grade students and I worked on an economics project which very briefly included the topic of education. The students that year were asked several questions about our school system; some of the questions were answered, but others remained unanswered. I saw many opportunities for expansion of this topic. To enlarge upon this beginning, to give the students an understanding of the operation of a school system, and to help them make wise decisions as adults, I chose an in-depth study of the Fort Smith school system—"What Makes the Schoolbell Ring?"—as my economics unit for the year.

My objectives were related to the nine topics which we studied. These were: (1) scarcity and choices, (2) wants, (3) decision making and opportunity cost, (4) goods and services, (5) productive resources, (6) taxes, (7) specialization and interdependence, (8) technology, and (9) circular flow.

Teaching Plan

Scarcity and choices. After this project was chosen, several events happened in our school system which contributed greatly to our study. Darlene McNeil, our principal, came to the class and told us she had something very important to talk with us about. She told us that the school system was going to have $0.7 million to $1.0 million less to spend next year than in this year. Ms. McNeil said that one reason for the cut in the budget was that we would receive less from the state government. She stated that we had to start planning how to save money in our school.

After she left, I asked the class, "What can we as a school do to spend less?" To encourage the students to work hard and to come up with good ideas, I told them the entries would be judged, and prizes would be given for the best ones. The winner of the contest was given a choice of prizes—a spiral notebook or five pencils. I introduced the term *choice* to the students by using the choice the winner had made.

Our discussion of these ideas led us into how we could let other people in our school know about the importance of saving and what they could do. Some suggestions were bulletin boards, posters, letters, word-of-mouth, newspaper, puppets, and plays. Committees were formed to prepare some type of presentation. After discussion between the members of each group, three groups chose to write plays and two groups elected to draw posters. The posters advertised for others to be wise and to save money by saving different items around the school. The play committees decided to wait until they had a better understanding of economics before they wrote their plays. When they did write their plays, the plays included economics and pointed out the wise use of resources. Another educational tool that developed from this was a newspaper. The fifth graders provided the newspaper with some articles, puzzles, and cartoons, but most of the newspaper was written by one student who took a special interest in writing and publishing.

Two guest speakers visited our class during this phase of our study. Our first guest speaker was John Owen, assistant superintendent. He discussed the school's operating budget and the proposed four-mill increase that would soon be voted upon. Dr. Owen used part of his time to explain about mills and how they are figured. I also invited Ralph Mott to talk to the class on the problem of scarcity and how it relates to his occupation. Mr. Mott is the architect who designed our school. He opened his talk by stating that architecture and economics go together. The building of Echols was a good example of architecture and economics being combined. When Echols was built in 1956, it was the last of several schools and additions to schools to be built from a single bond issue. Because Echols was last, money for the project ran short and certain items in the school had to be left off. Mr. Mott explained that economics is the first step in architecture.

Wants. I related wants to something the fifth graders could identify with—their families. After discussing our wants, I asked the students to help me make a bulletin board entitled "Wants." The students drew and cut out items which represented a want and placed them on the bulletin board.

Decision making and opportunity costs. To introduce the economic terms *decision making* and *opportunity costs,* I used an example the students could relate to at school. I reminded them that the PTA gives $5 to the class whose parents had the best attendance at the PTA meeting. We pretended that we had received the money, and we wanted to use it some way. First, I introduced the five steps of economic decision making to the class. Then we proceeded to work our way through the steps. At the end of the lesson, I had the students use the decision-making process to decide what they would do with $5.

I wanted the children to become well acquainted with all aspects of the school system. An aspect which the children did not have much association with was the school board. I invited Katherine Boulden, school board member, to speak to the fifth graders on the problems a school board faces, how a school board operates, and decisions the board makes.

To introduce the term *opportunity costs* I showed the class the film "Choice" from the series *Trade-Offs.* After viewing the film, we discussed it, using the questions and activities listed in the teacher's guide and answering questions on a worksheet. Finally, a simulation game called "Unequal Resources" developed by Margit McGuide of Seattle Pacific University was used to reinforce the terms *scarcity, opportunity costs,* and *wants.*

Goods and services. Miles Shopfner, director of purchasing and maintenance, and Barbara Rhoades, secretary for purchasing for the Fort Smith Public School System, came and told us about their jobs in purchasing supplies for the school system. Ms. Rhoades explained how supplies are requisitioned by the different schools and how they are purchased through her department. She gave the students an opportunity to judge quality, color, and overall general appeal of different items. Each time after the class had selected their favorite, Ms. Rhoades would tell the class the cost. After the visits of Mr. Shopfner and Ms. Rhoades, the students were given a price sheet for the items that could be requisitioned from the purchasing department of the school system. They were then given the assignment of making a list of the items they would requisition for the classroom if they were given the opportunity.

Productive resources. I introduced the students to the three productive resources—land, labor, and capital goods—by defining them. Then the students gave examples in our school of each resource. The students also divided a sheet of paper into thirds and drew and labeled the three factors of production as they related to the school. The students enjoyed learning about entrepreneurship as an example of a labor resource. The word *entrepreneur* attracted their attention; they were eager to learn what the word meant. I used their parents who owned businesses as examples to teach the concept.

Taxes. Both Ms. Boulden and Dr. Owen spoke about the millage increase, and Dr. Owen explained in his talk how taxes were figured. The local newspaper printed a daily article entitled "Dollars and Sense," which gave reasons persons should support the four-mill increase being asked for by the school system. Since this went along very well with our economic study of the school system, the students and I clipped and saved the articles and displayed them on a bulletin board.

Specialization and interdependence. As an introduction to this section of the unit, I had the students make a list of as many jobs in the school system as they were aware of. We discussed the jobs that had been listed, and I used their examples to present the economic term *specialization*. We made widgets to reinforce the term *specialization* and several other economic terms.

Our first guest speaker on specialization and interdependence was Ernestine Hunter, supervisor of elementary education. She spoke on specialists in education. Other speakers on this topic included our school secretary, the head cook, and another teacher.

Technology. The term *technology* had been discussed when we made widgets. The students saw how technology helped improve the production of the widgets. After making the widgets, we applied technology to schools. The class had fun listing items in the school which had improved through technology. As a part of our study, I invited Annise Skidmore to come and talk to the class. Ms. Skidmore formerly taught at Echols and is now retired. She divided her talk into thirteen parts about the changes in education.

Circular Flow. I wanted the students to have an understanding of how income and production interrelate with each other, so I explained the circular flow of goods and services and money. To relate the circular flow to our study of the school system, I had the class help me describe the flow paths as they related to the school. The students also designed their own circular flow charts and related them to the school system.

Concluding Activities

One of the final activities in our economic study was a field trip to the school service center. The students saw the offices of many of the persons who had come and talked to us. Another concluding activity involved the election of a classroom school board. The board selected a principal to operate our Economic Night School. The school was for the parents, with the students assuming the roles involved in the operation of a school. Students taught economic lessons to their parents, gave reports, presented their plays, awarded certificates of participation, and served refreshments. Fifty-five adults attended the school.

Evaluation

The students were evaluated using both a pretest and a post-test, teacher observation, parent evaluation, and written reports. Each aspect showed growth in understanding economics. The children impressed me with their knowledge of economics and schools and their ability to relate the two. I had hoped the Echols's fifth graders would acquire a working knowledge of economics in our public schools, and I was pleased with the results.

The Economics of the Ocean

An Economics Unit for the Fifth Grade

Cynthia Turner
Grottoes Elementary School, Grottoes, Virginia

Rationale

I grew up in Miami, Florida, enjoying the ocean as a part of my everyday life. I had a great fascination for the beaches and animals that shared that environment. As I grew up, hotels, golf courses, and other private enterprises started to be built on the sand dunes. The ocean wilderness as I once knew it near my home slowly disappeared. Hotels put fences up so that I could no longer explore the beach shore. Sewage from the hotels poured into the ocean from pipes only a few feet offshore. Swimming in some areas became questionable.

When I decided to develop an oceanography unit for my fifth graders, I wanted them to see the ocean as an exciting place just as I had as a child. But I also wanted my students to understsand that economic decisions pertaining to the ocean environment affect us all. What better way than to combine an oceanography and economics unit! To approximately 50 percent of my students the ocean was a distant place that they had never explored. I wanted this eight-week unit to develop in them an interest in that unknown. I hope this unit brought a little spark to rural Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley.

Objectives

- To help students develop analytical skills when dealing with economic decisions.
- To create an awareness of the interrelationships between ocean, ecology, and development of natural resources.

- To help students understand that our resources are limited in relationship to peoples' wants.
- To provide students with an understanding that the market price reflects the conditions of supply and demand.
- To help students understand that profit motivates individuals to make businesses more efficient by using new technology.
- To help students understand the advantages of dividing tasks among workers (division of labor).
- To provide students with the understanding that logical decisions are made by considering the alternatives and the opportunity cost of each choice.

Learning Activities

During the eight-week unit I used many forms of instructional activities. These included ditto sheets, worksheets, bulletin board displays, discussions, murals, films, books, cooking, film production, boat construction, and games. Practicing reading and writing skills along with the learning activities helped the students to more readily process information. The following paragraphs give an overview of some of the activities used in this economic unit.

Underwater equipment. To spark interest in the economics of the ocean, I started the unit with a chronological history of underwater equipment. Each student gave an oral report along with a presentation of prepared art work showing diving equipment. After the reports were presented, the following questions were discussed: How did improved technology change the diving equipment down through history? How does new capital equipment and technology enable people to work better and faster under water?

Ocean floor. The ocean floor was our next subject. Time was allotted for the students to draw and cut out a silhouette of the ocean floor. Studying the ocean floor set the stage for learning about the ocean's natural resources. Using the various books in the reading center, the students compiled a list of natural resources available in the ocean depths. We discussed the questions a company might consider when deciding whether to mine from the ocean depths: What will the production costs be? Is there a market for this particular natural resource? What could be done to reduce costs in mining? From the list of natural resources the students compiled, we discussed the profitability of each. Here is an example: Manganese is not as cost effective with present-day technology because manganese is found only at extreme depths of water. Oil, on the other hand, is cost effective with present-day technology.

Ocean pollution. Pictures of ocean pollution were posted on the bulletin board. I asked the students some thought-provoking questions such as these: What is the real cost to society when a company pollutes the environment? Who pays for these costly mistakes? Who is responsible for the cleanup? Will the oil company raise its price to take care of its mistakes?

Boat building. In contrast to previous activities which were more factually oriented, the following activities were more experientially based. I presented the class with patterns for paper boats that were too difficult to construct without a cooperative effort. When the students realized how difficult the boats were to construct, they asked if they could work together. Something very interesting happened. A group of six students organized themselves into a specialized task force. These students were the most successful. Several students refused help. Their construction was so poorly done that everyone agreed that their boats were unsafe. The class learned some valuable lessons about labor skills and specialization. We concluded two days of construction with a discussion based on our building experiences.

Fishing Game. After our boat construction experience, I divided the class into groups of four. One person in each group was selected to be the captain of a fishing boat. The other members of the group were the crew. "The Fishing Game" was played. First, fishing cards were placed on the floor behind a decorated table. The cards contained a fish species name and the poundage. Each student fished two times with a magnetic pole. The weight of the catch for each fishing boat was tallied on a worksheet along with the price per pound. Each group multiplied the weight by the price per pound as given on a handout. We then evaluated the fishing activity. Which crew made the most money? Which made the least? The different catches were evaluated. I led the students to understand that not only the fish poundage but also price per pound were determining factors.

I asked each group to divide the money made from its fishing into five equal shares. Two shares would go to the captain and one share would go to each crew member. We made a list on the chalkboard of all the captain's expenses. It included cost of boat, supplies, insurance, upkeep, licenses, and dock expenses. The students needed to understand that running a fishing boat costs more than just the payments for fuel. We listed on the chalkboard things that could affect the productivity of the crew. The list included hours worked, crew skills, fish availability, capital, and weather conditions. As an art activity, the students made realistic stuffed ocean fish for a bulletin board display.

Food for thought. My classes had enjoyed the oceanography unit so much that I suggested that we should sample some fish from our Virginia coast. We prepared steamed crab, steamed shrimp, fried oysters, and baked Spanish fish. After our delicious buffet, we compared the prices of the fish we had received. The waste of each kind of fish was compared. We also discussed why prices might change: What were some of the things that could affect the fishing industry?

Concluding Activities

My classes were very enthusiastic about all that we had done. Why not share part of our experiences with the kindergarten through fourth grades? First we made a bathysphere out of twenty-six cut plastic bags. Each bag was taped together with duct tape to form an oval-shaped bubble. A small fan was duct-taped to one end. The other end of the structure was left open for an entrance and exit area.

While working on the bathysphere we created a filmstrip about the economics of the ocean. After we had developed a script for the filmstrip, each student was assigned a filmstrip frame to create his own picture for the script. The pictures were colored in magic markers so they would stand out when photographed. The script was recorded on a cassette tape by a student narrator.

We were ready to be hosts to the rest of the school. We showed the filmstrip inside the bathysphere. Our bathysphere was large enough for twenty-eight children to crowd inside. However, more than just children came! Teachers, our principal, a county supervisor, and parents all crowded into the bathysphere for an underwater experience.

Evaluation

The types of evaluation I did were direct teacher observations, role play, written test, creative writings, worksheets, and reports. Through observation I watched to see if each student was grasping correctly the concept presented. Were the students understanding and using appropriate economics vocabulary words to express themselves? Written questions, worksheets, and reports gave me additional insight into the appropriate knowledge and understanding of concepts they were gaining.

GOOD IDEAS IN BRIEF: INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

JANE COUCH, a fourth-grade teacher at *Jenks West Elementary, Jenks, Oklahoma,* created a unit called "A Chain Is as Strong as Its Weakest Link; A Government Is as Strong as Its Weakest Citizen." The five-month unit was designed to acquaint students with basic economic concepts as related to national, state, and local governments and to show students how they could personally help those governments remain strong. Various media were used to introduce or enhance many economic concepts. One goal was to learn ways to help the federal government get out of debt. A "Three R's" approach was used to study past administrations' deficits and surpluses as well as national and international events that affected the budget. By studying past deficit spending, students arrived at many ways to cut spending in our daily lives, in our community, in our state, and in our national government. A study of large expenditures such as those for the Social Security system and the interstate highway system, and OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) policies and those related to the effects of the control over individual consumers helped the students gain more insight into our vast economic structure. To share their findings with the Tulsa area, they wrote and produced a fifteenminute videotape for Green County Television through Hi Jinx, their school's media production department. A major achievement was that the entire class decided to begin individual savings accounts. They had conceptualized the importance of a large national savings pool to keep our government solvent. To actively do what they could to reduce the national debt, they advertised, took orders, purchased, and delivered over 180 red, white, and blue carnations to the Jenks West schoolchildren. Their profit of $154.37 was sent to Tulsa's congressional representative, James Jones, who forwarded it to the U.S. Treasury Department for national debt reduction.

BRENDA CORBIN, a fourth-grade teacher, and JANE BAKER, a media specialist at the *Woods Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* developed a unit entitled "Timothy Ticket Traces His Roots." The idea for Timothy evolved after their visit to a local industry, Weldon, Williams & Lick, a ticket publisher, as part of the coursework for "Educators in Industry." For the initial activity, the children brought ticket stubs to class and formed a collage that gradually assumed the shape of a boy whom they named "Timothy." To learn a variety of economic concepts, they followed the seven steps of production, using ticket output as the example: getting the order, planning for production, designing the ticket, printing the ticket, maintaining quality control, shipping the ticket to the ticket seller, and selling the tickets to consumers. Posters, bulletin boards, mobiles, puppets, games, filmstrips, and tapes were all produced by the children during the course of the unit. A speaker from Weldon, Williams & Lick served as a consultant. He guided the children through the steps in producing a ticket and then answered their many questions. On their field trip to Calvert-McBride Printing Company, the children saw printing presses in operation, how cameras are used, how type is set, how the templates are used in offset printing, and how an assembly line operates. Weldon, Williams & Lick ships many tickets via Arkansas Best Freight, and on a field trip there the children were able to get a view of how tickets were shipped across the nation. Each child was even encouraged to climb up into the cab of an ABF truck and blow the horn!

As their unit came to a close, the class wanted to share what they had learned about the production of a ticket. They decided on a slide presentation, presenting the way Timothy Ticket traced his roots. Mr. Calvert, of Calvert-McBride Printing, offered his equipment to them to actually produce the tickets for their show. He prepared a tracer, designed the ticket, had the negatives prepared, and invited the class to bring one child to print the tickets. These tickets were sold for ten cents each. The children also hired a programmer from the sixth grade to write a computer program to produce complimentary tickets on their printer. These complimentary tickets were given to those who had been helpful during the study. The show was a tremendous success, but the students still had an unanswered question: What should be done with the profit? Since Weldon, Williams & Lick reinvested its profit in the company, the children decided to do the same. An economics computer program was purchased for the media center.

BETTY BRUMETT of *East Elementary School, Jonesboro, Arkansas,* developed a unit for teaching economics to her fifth-grade students. Since she was a firm believer that one learns from experience, the unit was to provide useful experiences about actual, everyday events. The students participated by establishing their own business in a "live" project. After consulting with the principal, the teacher was given permission to allow her students to own and operate the school supply store. This establishment had as its objective the selling of school supplies. The business involved the entire school population—her students as owners and operators of the business—others as consumers. Since East Elementary School was primarily composed of students from lower-income families, the consumers would not be "big spenders." This recognition helped the students to devise ways to meet the needs of this type of consumer. Also, this helped to create the name that was used, "School Supplies, Inc., Inflation Fighter." This unit was well-suited for subjects taught in fifth grade.

The students were required to keep a class notebook throughout the year. A sample of all work was kept in the class notebook. It was kept by the children and was always available for their use. The students were allowed to participate in all phases of the project. A variety of teaching methods was used to develop economic concepts, including class discussions, field trips, resource people, games, films, filmstrips, reading activities, art activities, and real experiences relating to a business. In the assessment of this unit, it was believed that the real experiences would remain with these students and would help them to be better decision makers and better problem solvers as they became responsible and productive members of society. As a concluding activity, the students played "Econo" (a game similar to "Tic Tac Dough"), had slides made of themselves as they worked in the various aspects of the business, and displayed their office and bookkeeping activities to visitors in the classroom.

SUSAN DAVIS, a teacher at *Utica Elementary School* in *Utica, Kentucky,* began "Fifth Grade Finance" as an attempt to motivate students and improve their work habits. The students were paid $5.00 in construction paper currency for each completed assignment. In turn, they paid the teacher or "government" $5.00 for failure to complete work. Based on grades, pay increases or decreases were also given. As funds grew, a bank was programmed on the classroom computer. Students then had access to checkwriting privileges, deposits, withdrawals, loans, and a savings program that paid 14 percent interest. Students were also faced with many expenses. The biggest was the purchase or rental of a home (desk). Three housing areas were available: Private Penthouses (the best seats in the room) sold for $250 with financing at 10 percent interest; Harmon Heights (a middle-income subdivision) sold for $200 with 12 percent finance charge or rented for $50 a month; and Davis Duplexes (the poorest area of the room) rented for $40 a month. Students decided where they wished to sit; then lease or loan agreements were signed. As homeowners, the students were faced with another dilemma—utility costs. From September through November, each student was assessed $15 per month. The cost went up to $20 when a cold spell hit the area in December. Job benefits were discussed in response to the two-week unpaid Christmas vacation. The concept of insurance was introduced after money was ruined in the washing machine. In April the students discussed income taxes and studied sample forms. During the last six weeks of the year, students were able to make a $500 stock investment using stock tables available in the local paper. Since some feared risking this much money, stock conglomerates were formed with friends. During the last week of school, each student's assets were liquidated when money was spent at a classroom auction. These students were aware of the "real world." They could see that money does not "grow on trees." They learned to make decisions, develop priorities, use time wisely, and feel good about themselves.

MARILYN SUT LOKEY, MAE RUTH COHEA, PATRICK WHEELER, sixth-grade teachers, and BILL SPICER, the principal of *Cook Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* organized a unit entitled "Voluntarism." Through the use of discussions, activities, field trips, resource speakers, and evaluations, the students learned basic economic terms and concepts that enabled them to understand the economic values of the services provided by various volunteers in Fort Smith. The introductory activity was developed by having Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Spicer, in uniform, discuss their work as volunteer police officers. They discussed various types of services they provided for the benefit and protection of citizens of Fort Smith. An interest center was set up to display capital goods which they used in their work. Other volunteers who visited our class and talked about their work in terms of economics were a representative from United Way, the volunteer coordinator of the Fort Smith Public Schools, a volunteer fire fighter, and the director of volunteer services at Saint Edward of Mercy Hospital. Through various art activities the students illustrated economic terms they learned. Mathematical calculations were performed to determine dollar amounts of the value of the services provided by the volunteers. Students took field trips to the Old Fort River Festival and Saint Edward of Mercy Hospital where they were able to relate economic terms and concepts to the actual work being done by the volunteers. As a concluding activity of their study of economics, the students wrote and performed skits to illustrate the economic concepts they learned as these concepts related to the volunteers whose work they studied.

JOYCE TAYLOR, a fourth-grade teacher in *Cook Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* who taught social studies to three classes in a departmentalized teaching situation, developed a course of study to teach economics and divided it into seven major activities. Many popular characters and a neighborhood shopping center were used to illustrate these activities: Consumers (Miss Piggy), Producers (Smurf), Marketplace (Fianna Village), Prices (Garfield), Competition (Annie and Sandy), Making Choices (E.T.), and Profit Motive (Ziggy). These characters generated interest and enthusiasm in economics evinced by frequent "oohs" and "aahs" expressed by the students during the introduction of this study as transparencies of these conceptual characters were placed in the "marketplace" on the screen. In the course of study, diverse activities and learning centers were used to develop a "hands-on" understanding as the pupils explored the market at work. Construction of a United States topographical map, displaying the main products of its eight regions, enlightened the students concerning environmental effects on consumption and production and concerning the scarcity of productive resources. Role-playing activities, flannel board programs, and dioramas depicted some 100 marketplaces. A visit to a community shopping center composed of many types of markets allowed the students to examine wants, choices, scarcity, inflation, competition, and tariffs. Students formed companies and competed against each other in the production, advertisement, and sale of toy dolls. Puppet presentations exhibited opportunity cost. Additionally, entrepreneurs, the profit motive, specialization, comparative advantage, and trade were scrutinized when the students formed companies. This time the students produced a variety of products made from available classroom materials, advertised their products, and displayed them for sale in a minimall, eager to reap rewards for their risks. Lastly, using selected conceptual characters, the students, individually and in groups, retold our economic story by showing how consumers and producers interact in the marketplace. They used filmstrips, tapes, puppet plays, skits, role playing, pantomimes, feltboard activities, and a slide presentation. Pre- and post-test scores revealed that the students made significant progress in their understanding of the market at work. As one student enthusiastically put it, "We learned how the world works."

HELEN BRANUM, a fifth-grade teacher at *Sutton Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* developed a unit on food with special emphasis on the effects of weather on our food supply. Since food is a basic need, the class explored the many facets of the food industry. During the study of nutrition in health and science classes, the students started bringing in articles dealing with various problems of the food sector of our economy. The instructor decided on a very practical approach since about 50 percent of her students were from low-income homes. One of her objectives was for them to learn that food is a major item in the family budget. Thus, they had to learn the value of food dollars. They first took a field trip to a nearby produce market. The owner talked to them about produce and how supply and demand affects his prices. He stressed that production of crops depends a great deal on good weather. The class continued to watch for related newspaper articles, used pamphlets, filmstrips, and transparencies, and developed an economic vocabulary. The students collected labels from foods and learned how the information on labels can help consumers. A field trip to the Gerber Food plant brought some new ideas to the study. Students learned that there are many costs in operating a business—depreciation, repairs, building costs, advertising, taxes, etc. A row-crop farmer who worked a 100-acre farm talked to the class about several topics related to the farming industry. One topic was that bad weather is a big problem for farmers. He related how the weather bureau provides a real service to farmers by giving advance notice of frost, hailstorms, etc. This part of the study concluded with a visit to the local office of the National Weather Service. When they were told that due to cutbacks in government spending, agricultural reports for farmers would no longer be available, the students immediately commented that those reports were valuable to farmers in preventing losses due to weather conditions. The closing activity was a fruit and cheese party for the parents. Students were pleased to review their study and to show that many economic terms and concepts had indeed given them "food for thought."

PAULA SANDERS, a fifth-grade teacher at *Trusty Elementary School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* taught a unit of economics incorporated into the social studies curriculum and focused attention on understanding scarce resources, making wise choices, and helping students clarify their economic goals and values. She selected many economic concepts to teach but left the curriculum "open ended" and let the activities emerge from the students' interests and everyday activities. This project was implemented mainly through activities, although it began with a study of basic economic information. A label and wrapper fundraising drive sponsored by the PTA made it obvious that many of the students did not know the value of the labels or how they could be redeemed. Some of the students thought a label was worth as much as the original cost of the item. Others thought that a bank would pay money for the labels. Upon completion of this study, students were able to define, identify, illustrate, and deal with the problem of scarcity, and to name and discuss the factors of production. They were able to discriminate between wants and needs and to define money in relation to exchange for goods and services. Even though a majority of these students were from educationally and economically deprived families, the pupils planned a budget, wrote checks, balanced a checkbook, bartered for goods, studied a payroll check stub, and were given four savings plans. The students did comparison shopping in newspapers and magazines. Students were asked to describe their own values and goals in order to help them understand that values and goals give meaning to life and make a contribution to our economy. They concluded their unit of study with a game of volleyball, earned with the label and wrapper drive, and a highly successful game of Economic Baseball.

HATTIE LOIS STONE, a fourth-grade teacher, and MARGHARITA SUE MORGAN, the principal of the *Ballman Elementary School* in *Fort Smith, Arkansas,* developed a fourth-grade unit "Teacher and Principal Make a 'Crafty' Team for Teaching Economics." This was a year-long project of producing and marketing seasonal pieces of ceramics to the public to help raise money to purchase ceiling fans for Ballman School. With the help of the PTA, they began the project with a before-school workshop for fourth-grade students, designed to emphasize economic skills while teaching the fundamentals of working with ceramics. Once production was under way, students could see how division of labor worked. They sensed quickly that some children were more skillful at pouring up molds, others at cleaning or glazing. Students began specializing in one of these areas. During the course of the year's project the students learned such basic economic concepts as entrepreneurship, profit and loss, productive resources, competition, production and marketing, circular flow, problems of inflation, and the steps in economic decision making. Educational experiences were broadened by resource people, the PTA, and the general public. Pretest and post-test scores reflected distinctive gains in economic knowledge. The project concluded when PTA officers took the students on a field trip to see "Tom Smith and His Incredible Bread Machine," a mime and puppet show that taught an entertaining lesson in economics and freedom.

PAMELA K. MALCUIT, a fifth-grade teacher at *Shore Acres School, St. Petersburg, Florida,* developed an eight-week unit called "Two Trails to Sea World." It incorporated drama, music, speech, history, and economics. The students wanted to present a musical stage production. However, they needed capital to finance the play. In the fall they had learned the art of soft sculpture, using recycled nylon stockings to make puppets. That knowledge was put to use in the production of "Flower People." The students anticipated demand and a market because the Pineallas County Economic Fair and Valentine's Day would take place before the date of their musical. They approached the PTA for a loan and were supplied with $200 as capital. During the production of the flower creations, the students learned about economic principles such as resources, capital, competition, specialization, opportunity costs, and profit. The sales from this project financed the musical. Profits from both enterprises were used to help defray the costs of the end-of-the-year trip to Sea World.

CHAPTER THREE

Economic Learning Activities and the Junior High School Social Studies Curriculum

Jeanne Kish, Richard Salo, and Anthony Stanonik
Central Junior High School, Cleveland, Ohio

Introduction and Background

This economics unit was developed by three teachers at Central Junior High School, an inner-city school in the Cleveland City School District. Jeanne Kish has been with the district for fifteen years as a secondary social studies teacher and consultant teacher. She has developed numerous curricular materials. During the period of this project she taught seventh-grade social studies. Richard Salo, a ninth-grade social studies teacher, has been with the system fourteen years and is currently head of the department. He helped develop the Living Classrooms Curriculum guide. Anthony Stanonik, who currently teaches eighth-grade social studies, has been with the system twelve years and has participated as a field test teacher in curricular projects.

Central Junior High has approximately 1,100 students enrolled and is comprehensive in nature, offering programs for developmentally handicapped through major work students. The student population is approximately 70 percent black and 30 percent other (Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and white). Over two-thirds of the students are bused into the school from other neighborhoods. Nearly all students qualify for the free, federally funded lunch program, indicating a low average family income level.

These unit materials were designed to provide a resource to classroom teachers that would enable them to begin to integrate economic principles into the existing junior high social studies curriculum. It was hoped that these units would serve as a springboard to encourage the development of additional learning activities that would integrate economic education and the current curriculum.

Each of the teachers selected a unit in the existing curriculum in which to develop specific economic learning activities.

The unit selected in the seventh-grade world cultures course was "Early Civilization." The economic concepts emphasized included scarcity, wants, competition, choices, and the exchange of goods and services.

In the eighth-grade American history course, the unit selected was "Industrialization." The economic concepts emphasized were capital, competition, labor, management, productivity, regulation, specialization, supply and demand, and trade-offs.

In the ninth-grade civics course, the unit selected was "Consumer Economics." The economic concepts emphasized were decision making, wants, supply and demand, competition, and trade-offs.

Several planning sessions were held by the three teachers. It was decided that each unit developed would include at least one of the following types of activities: a vocabulary building exercise, a reading exercise, and a map exercise. Other activities were to be developed at the discretion of the individual teacher. Teachers conferred with one another as the units progressed. Three days were spent evaluating and writing up the units. A conference with the social studies directing supervisor was held to plan how to train other junior high school teachers to use the economics units and how to perhaps apply the units as a springboard to develop additional units that would integrate economics with the existing junior high social studies curriculum.

Seventh-Grade Unit

The unit selected for the seventh-grade world cultures course was "Early Civilizations." The main economic concepts emphasized included: scarcity, wants, competition, choices and trade-offs, and the exchange of goods and services (barter and trade).

The class I selected to field test the unit materials had thirty-eight students. Approximately 80 percent of the class were black, the other 20 percent were white. Seventeen students were classified as nonreaders. This class had also been the subject of an experimental discipline program using behavior modification as a method of improving student behavior and listening skills. This class was selected because the members showed marked improvement in listening skills over a period of three months. The use of a simulation game with seventh graders necessitates competence in these listening skills.

The unit consisted of four learning activities. These activities included:

1. *Vocabulary Skill Building Activity.* Included alphabetization, definitions, a word scramble, and a word search puzzle.
2. *Reading Activity.* Included a directed reading worksheet based on barter and trade.
3. *A Map Activity.* Used to introduce students to the mythical land they would inhabit in the simulation game.
4. *A Simulation Game.* A game of trade and barter in which students role played residents of three different communities, with the goal of obtaining

a specific list of products and services by the end of the game. It involved not only listening skills, but skills in socialization and mathematics.

The learning activities were set up to be interrelated. Each activity was related to the one that followed. The first activity was developed to make students aware of the vocabulary terms they would need to know in order to complete the reading and participate in the simulation game. The reading activity (item 2) was designed to provide the student with a clear explanation of barter. The map activity (item 3) was designed to present to the student the mythical location of the simulation game. The simulation game (item 4) was presented to allow the student to observe the actual process of trade and barter through a hands-on experience.

The first three activities comprised a minor part of the unit. The vocabulary activity was accomplished with a minimum of explanation, since the form used for the activity was one which the students had been using all year. The reading activity was first read aloud in class. The directed reading sheet was explained and instructions were given. Students completed the activity as a homework assignment. The next day, the directed reading worksheets were discussed and corrected. The map activity, besides being used to allow the students to acquaint themselves with the mythical land in which the simulation game would take place, also provided an opportunity for the students to use map skills which they had developed during the school year.

The simulation game was the major activity of the unit. It took four days to play the game, which required the students to assume the roles of the residents of three different societies in a mythical land called Kookamonga, where the main occupation was farming. Other groups included the Oogaboogas, who were nomadic hunters, and the Gotahavmors, a neighboring farm community with less fertile soil and fewer natural resources than the Kookamongans. The object of the game was to trade goods and services between the three different countries until each member of the class had obtained as many of the items on the list which fit their specific character. One whole class period was spent explaining the game and how it worked. Most of the students had never played a simulation game before, so this was a new experience for them. The one problem with the game was that the students became frustrated if they could not obtain all the items on their list. It was, however, on the whole, a very successful experience for the students. Eventually most of the class came to realize that services as well as goods could be bartered and that the Oogaboogas, who were nomadic hunters, had to adapt their lifestyle in order to obtain the items on their lists.

The main economic concept I stressed in the unit was interdependence. Each of the activities stressed the following concepts:

Vocabulary Skill Building—Goods, services, luxuries, necessities, wants, barter, marketplace, and value

Reading Activity—Competition, exchange of goods and services, interdependence, scarcity, and technology

Map Activity—Natural resources
Simulation Game—Competition, decision making, interdependence, specialization, supply and demand, and wants

A pre/post test was developed and administered to the students. Seventy-seven percent of the students improved their grade on the post-test. Forty percent of the students in the class improved their grade on the post-test by at least 20 percent.

Eighth-Grade Unit

The eighth-grade unit consisted of six different learning activities centered on the industrialization of the United States, with the emphasis on economic concepts. This unit was taught to the afternoon social studies class. It comprised twenty-eight students who were heterogeneously grouped. This particular group was chosen because of the inquisitiveness of the students, their willingness to participate in classroom activities, and their good attendance at school.

The unit was taught over a five-week period toward the end of the school year. It included the following learning activities:

1. *Industrialization: The Formation of Trusts.* A Mystery Sentence Puzzle
2. *Industrialization: The Formation of Trusts.* A Reading, "John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil"
3. *Industrialization: The Role of the Entrepreneur.* A Simulation, "The Trial of John D. Rockefeller"
4. *Industrialization: The Regulation of Trusts.* A Reading of Primary Sources and an Acrostic
5. *Industrialization: Labor vs. Big Business.* A Play and Crossword Puzzle
6. *Industrialization:* A Word Search

There were specific economic concepts relative to each learning activity; however, the main economic concepts emphasized throughout this unit on industrialization were competition, management, and supply and demand. These concepts recurred and were the basis of the unit. Some of the other economic concepts emphasized were capital, labor, productivity, regulation, and the influence of values on choices.

This unit was introduced to my class with a brief description of the activities: the trial of John D. Rockefeller and *Labor vs. Big Business,* a play. After hearing about these activities, the class was eager to begin this unit. We began the unit by learning some important economic terms and placing these terms on the bulletin board. We continued the unit by reading about the development of the Standard Oil Company. Since the next activity was to be the trial of John D. Rockefeller, the students were eager to get as much background information as possible. A class discussion was held in which we considered the economic concepts used by John D. Rockefeller.

Our next activity was to put John D. Rockefeller on trial. The students were given a description of each role and the procedures to be followed. After the students had an understanding of each role, they were allowed to select the role they wanted. The roles of John D. Rockefeller and the judges were eagerly sought; therefore, I had to make the final choice. To prepare for the trial, the students got together in groups and went over their available information. I offered suggestions as to possible strategy and questions to be asked. The defense attorney and assistant met with their witnesses and rehearsed their questions. The same was done with the prosecutor and his assistant. I made available research materials that they could use.

The preparation period took approximately three days. While the defense and prosecution prepared their cases, the judges were reading material about the period so they would have as much information as possible to reach a fair verdict. The students who were reporters looked at various political cartoons depicting John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil. They were to make copies or draw an original cartoon for the trial.

The students took the trial very seriously and conducted themselves as professionals. The questions asked by both sides were very good ones. The verdict came as a surprise—the judges found John D. Rockefeller *not guilty*. They based their verdict on the failure of the prosecution to prove its case: that John D. Rockefeller was guilty of the misuse of his power and that he acted in an illegal manner.

The next activity was planned to teach how labor used various economic concepts to further its cause. The students acted out a play which depicted the plight of the workers at the Cleveland Rolling Mills in 1882 and 1885. As part of this activity, the students had to make picket signs and to march and demonstrate. The review and use of discussion questions helped the students see that confrontation is sometimes easy to fall into and that compromise is not always easy to achieve. It gave them some insight into the problems early unions faced. A strike presented a perfect opportunity to teach opportunity costs.

Both of these activities had the advantage of featuring local personalities and situations. This feature, plus the student-centered nature of the activities, helped motivate the students and make this unit a success.

A pre/post test was developed and administered to the students. All the students who took both tests showed a positive increase. The median score on the pretest was 32 percent, while the median score on the post-test improved to 64 percent.

Ninth-Grade Unit

The basis of this unit was four separate learning activities centered on consumer economics. It was conducted in all five ninth-grade social studies classes. These learning activities included work on the following:

1. Advertising/propaganda techniques
2. Reading labels

3. Unit pricing
4. Grocery store mapping
5. Vocabulary review puzzle

Several key economic concepts were emphasized including decision making, competition, opportunity costs, and the roles of producer, consumer, and citizen. Some important economic terms covered in the unit included *advertising, budget, consumer, impulse buying, monopoly,* and *unit pricing.* At the end of the unit, the vocabulary review puzzle was used so that students would be forced to go over the key terms and concepts in preparation for the post-test.

The first learning activity I presented to the classes concerned advertising/propaganda techniques, and it seemed to be particularly enjoyable for them. The students were informed that they would be taking a look at advertising and propaganda. They were given a worksheet that involved matching various propaganda techniques with examples. Many students quickly ran into difficulty, although most were able to correctly match "bandwagon," "testimonial," and "slanting ideas" with the correct examples. After grading their papers, the class discussed why each example best represented each type of propaganda. This continued until a consensus was reached. Several follow-up questions were discussed, and during the next class period, the students reviewed the key concepts and terms from a consumer's point of view. As a homework assignment, the class was told to watch television and keep track of commercial time. Almost all were astounded to learn how much time a person would spend watching television advertising each year if one simply watched commercial television for three hours a day.

The final strategy of this learning activity—to have students create their own products and ads for them—produced some interesting results as many of the propaganda techniques studied were found in them. Many of the students were quite creative and came up with elaborate artwork, peppy jingles, and snappy slogans.

The learning activities on unit pricing and label reading provoked lively discussions on the concepts of decision making, trade-offs, regulations, pricing, and the role of the consumer, the producer, and the citizen. Several students even wrote the Food and Drug Administration to obtain copies of regulations affecting packaging and ingredient listing. Several key terms, including *impulse buying, natural and artificial ingredients,* became much clearer as my students carefully analyzed labels.

The next learning activity required that each student "map" a grocery store to learn similarities/differences in the locations of certain items. Blank maps were provided, although some students preferred to do their own maps on posterboard. The maps were compared/contrasted in class. The concepts of competition, decision making, opportunity costs, and wants were heavily stressed as were several economic terms, especially *budget, advertising,* and *impulse buying.* Questions on cents-off coupons helped to tie this activity together with the one on unit pricing. Also, the grocery lists students were directed to prepare helped them utilize skills and reinforce economic concepts learned in the activities on reading labels and unit pricing.

Finally, a vocabulary review puzzle was used as the final learning activity to help students review the key terms and concepts in preparation for the post-test. A pre/post test was developed and administered to the students. Over 95 percent of the students improved their grades on the post-test. The average improvement for all students was 32 percent.

Alaska Trekonomiks

Harvey Brandt
Blatchley Junior High School, Sitka, Alaska

Background

Blatchley Junior High School's 400 students live in Sitka, an island community of 9,000 people situated in southeastern Alaska. All eighth graders enrolled in Blatchley participated in the simulation game described in this article. The student body is an ethnically mixed group whose parents work in tourism, logging, pulp mills, government, and the fishing industries.

Each year 10 percent of the eighth-grade social studies students are selected on a competitive basis for a five-day field trip to Juneau. While there, they study the legislature first-hand with a special emphasis on committee meetings. Eighth graders in Blatchley Junior High School consider this one of the highlights of the school year.

During the last three years the study of economics has been an integral part of the selection process for the trip to Juneau. Students who do well in Alaska Trekonomiks receive recognition points toward this trip. One has to live in southeast Alaska to fully appreciate the impact that a five-day visit to the capital city has on a Sitka eighth grader. The isolation of living in an island community seems to spur the competition to a fairly intense level among those sophisticated eighth graders who visit Grandma in Seattle and spend Christmas in Hawaii. Needless to say, the trip to Juneau is big-time stuff.

Introduction

Alaska's geography dictates the unique requirements for the transportation and communication systems existing within the state. The size, terrain, permafrost, and climate create formidable economic obstacles to the creation of an elaborate transportation system such as is found in many of the other forty-nine states. I thought these problems provided the perfect basis for a simulation game emphasizing the chief economic concepts related to the tourism industry, which is presently the fastest-growing industry in Alaska. Traveling through Alaska is more expensive than traveling in the other forty-nine states, and the tourism approach seemed to be the best vehicle for teaching economic concepts in an enjoyable and stimulating manner.

This simulation game strongly emphasized the integration of writing, mathematics, and social studies skills. Students were also encouraged to consult with family members for advice in planning their tour of the state. The most important factor was that the students using this simulation game realized that social studies learning could be practical and entertaining and need not be limited to the familiar worksheet questions done with the aid of a difficult-to-read textbook.

I began Alaska Trekonomics with an introduction to basic economic concepts. Students were then notified by letter that they were finalists for the position of Alaska tour director with a major travel agency. Economic rewards awaited the student who successfully planned and executed an economically feasible and esthetically attractive tour package. These rewards included food, grade points, and a three-day trip to Juneau. Less tangible rewards were learning economic concepts, using freedom to make choices in the classroom, gaining satisfaction derived from planning a successful tour of Alaska, and feeling good about school. (The letter appears on page 58.)

After students made the initial decisions, they then designed an overall plan for touring at least four regions of the state, using a minimum of four types of transportation and staying overnight in four different cities. One example of daily economic decision making for each partnership was whether to go first class (lower grades but pop and cookies) or cheaply (no goodies but higher grades-opportunity cost); another was to choose a deluxe hotel (pop) along with inexpensive transportation (no cookies but a slightly higher grade trade-off). The trade-off option was offered to the students after they had learned opportunity cost.

To make this simulation game measurable, manageable, and practical, I required one budget sheet daily by each team. Each budget sheet was essentially an economic research report for one leg of the tour and was graded and handed back to the students the next day. The resulting discussion helped to correct students' misunderstanding of economic concepts. Although this entire unit took fifteen days, the statewide tour phase took five days to complete. All rules governing this tour were in the Smiley Letter, on posters, and on other handouts included in the game packet.

I expected each student to become acquainted with several economic concepts by the end of the tour: scarcity and choice, opportunity cost, trade-off, productive resources, and government taxation. Having struggled with the tough decisions concerning quality of service, route structure, and budgeting

HAPPY FACE TRAVELERS BUREAU

401 Pike Street
Seattle, Washington 98553

February 18, 1983

Dear Applicant:

Congratulations! Your application for Tour Director has been reviewed, and you have been selected as a finalist for the job.

In order to get the job, you must successfully complete a research tour of Alaska. Your departure point is Seattle; your final destination is Juneau. You leave tomorrow: Although you are required to use four different types of transportation in order to acquaint yourself with all types of Alaska traveling, you should try to complete this tour as quickly as possible. Yet, to be successful, you should try to see as much of Alaska as possible in the time available. In order to be hired you must do the following:

1. Form a partnership with one other student. This partnership will need a checking account and a name, and should be registered with the state of Alaska.
2. Decide whether or not you wish to buy accident prevention insurance.
3. Design the route, transportation methods, and housing for your tour. You must stay overnight once in each region.
4. Prepare a budget for your study tour.
5. You must visit one community in southeastern Alaska (not counting Juneau); one in southcentral Alaska; one in the interior; and one in northwestern, northern, or western Alaska.
6. Listen carefully to all instructions given by our Vice President of Alaska Tours, ______________________________.
7. Get ready for a surprise assignment (LOFOLOTOT).

Eventually, if you get the job, you will be accompanying large groups of tourists on their tour of Alaska. Our customers demand good service, top-notch transportation facilities, super food, friendly assistance, and stimulating entertainment. They want to see the best that Alaska has to offer; if you do well in this research tour, you will be the new Alaska Tour Director.

Budget your time, money, and experiences carefully. Keep a sharp eye peeled for any tourist attractions, industries of bygone days, and possible bargains for our company.

One last thing--please look up five of my old friends while you are in Alaska: Ms. Opportunity Cost; her cousin, Ms. Trade-off; Mr. Government Intervention; Ms. Scarcity; and Ms. Productive Resources and her children, Natural, Human, and Capital. You can learn much about economics from these friends.

If you succeed, you will be awarded the job, get a bonus for excellent work, and possibly will be rewarded with a three-day trip to Juneau.

Respectfully yours,

Thurman Z. Backstabber, President and Chief Operating Officer, Alaska Tours Inc.

of time/money, students were to have then demonstrated a keen appreciation for the importance of economic decision making in their lives.

Paralleling the tour planning by my students was a series of intercom announcements concerning disasters which had the potential of wreaking havoc upon the state's vulnerable economy. Alaska's economy is quite dependent upon oil for tax income (90 percent at this time), so the Alaska pipeline was first destroyed by an earthquake. After it was repaired and things were back to normal, the Columbia glacier began discharging ice rapidly, thus preventing tankers from servicing the tank farm at Valdex (terminus of the pipeline). This, in turn, disrupted the entire economy and ultimately affected the tourism industry because the legislature threatened to place a prohibitively high tax on the industry in order to regain lost revenue. (All of these hypothetical problems were based upon geologically authentic problems.)

These announcements could be made at any time during the class period (whenever the office secretary had a free moment); the students were instructed to write down any and all announcements and to attempt to make some sense of them. This began a dialogue among the students which eventually helped them to integrate their economic knowledge with the tourism industry.

The point of all this activity was that they were required to write a persuasive letter at the end of the simulation game, lobbying their legislator to vote against such harsh taxation of the tourism industry. The students were encouraged to explore more subtle arguments with their legislators than simply voting for or against the tax measure. The sophistication of their arguments largely dictated their grade on this particular assignment. The letter-writing assignment raised questions about the economic impact that taxation had upon a particular industry.

LOFOLOTOT stands for Lobbying For Lower Taxes On Tourism. I devised the acronym to pique the students' imagination and test their resourcefulness while they were playing the simulation game. Of course, I offered a handsome prize for the student who discovered the meaning of this acronym. This was introduced early in the simulation game in the Smiley Letter.

This economics unit concluded with three days of review, evaluation, analyzation, lobbying, and final recordkeeping from which I derived a single grade for the entire unit of study. A special analysis sheet was included in the kit to allow me to do the recordkeeping efficiently and accurately with the aid of the students.

Evaluation

All grades taken during the simulation-game portion of this unit were summarized into one grade at the end of the unit. These consisted of three items: (1) budget sheets–daily planning, (2) letter, and (3) final test. These scores were tallied on the analysis sheet, and all papers were turned in with the analysis sheet at the end of the unit. These items revealed that the students learned economic concepts, integrated skill development with a study of the

Alaskan tourism industry, and practiced decision making while they had fun in social studies. We touched on both the affective and cognitive domain on the eighth-grade level.

This simulation game was not designed to be used by the teacher who desires straight desk rows, quiet, and absolute order in the classroom; nor was it designed for the teacher inexperienced in the use of simulation games. However, if any teacher needs a tool to develop Socratic dialogue in the classroom, to remind students that social studies can be stimulating and enjoyable, that economic concepts can be integrated into a study of the tourism industry, then this game is certainly a possible way to do it. This simulation game is an exhilarating experience for students and teacher alike if all are willing to work hard.

The Economic Ups and Downs of the 1920s and 1930s

Lynn Vlets
Monticello Junior High School, Monticello, Arkansas

Background

The city of Monticello is located in the southeastern corner of Arkansas, near the edge of the Mississippi delta, with a population of 8,259. The community is primarily rural and depends on factory employment that necessitates shiftwork for many families. Over the past few years, the economic condition has been poor with unemployment on the rise. Nearly 50 percent of our students in Monticello Junior High qualify for free lunches and do not live with both of their natural parents.

Objectives

Since my eighth graders had begun the year with a philosophy that social studies is the study of humankind and how they solve their problems, it was not difficult to develop an economics unit that would help us understand business cycles and their effects upon our community. With unemployment in Drew County at 10.1 percent in September 1982 and 15.5 percent in January

1983, students were aware of the hard facts of economics in the area. Many of them were alarmed at the bleak prospects for summer jobs and were quick to blame various agencies in government.

Students were reminded that as we had studied the earlier periods in American history, we found that economically our nation had experienced both good times and bad times. These periods of ups and downs had some similarities and seemed to appear and disappear in cycles. Many students had grandparents who experienced the hard times of the late 1920s and 1930s, and it was decided that our project would focus on that period, since it contained all four cycles of prosperity, recession, depression, and recovery. The study would end by attempting to determine the status of the current phase of the business cycle and to use that data to understand how it would affect the students' local job prospects. We then proceeded to formulate specific goals and objectives for our project that we would pursue during the second semester.

Economic Goals

- To create an awareness in the students of their role in the free market economy of the United States
- To instill wise decision making in every role of the economy from consumer, to producer, to government
- To introduce the study of economics in such a way as to motivate students to use the knowledge learned in their everyday life
- To develop the ability of studnts to think and act in analytical terms
- To convey an understanding of the role economics has played in historical events and the role humans have played in them
- To realize that in economics, as in the study of other social sciences, we learn from our past experiences.

Project Objectives

Students will:

1. Describe the conditions that exist in the four phases of the business cycle: prosperity, recession, depression, and recovery;
2. List and explain the causes for the recession immediately after World War I;
3. List and explain the reasons for the rapid recovery and prosperity of the mid-1920s;
4. List and explain the causes of the Great Depression that began in 1929;
5. List and explain the foreign and domestic causes of changes in the business cycle;
6. Appreciate the role they play as consumers in a mixed economy in determining the business cycle;
7. Determine what phase of the business cycle the United States is currently experiencing by examining available data;

8. List the effects of the business cycles on various given jobs;
9. Examine the changing role of government in the late 1920s and 1930s in the United States economy;
10. List the major differences between a mixed economy and a command economy.

Learning Activities

After pretesting, using the *Junior High School Test of Economics* and a test that I developed on business cycles, I realized that the class had to spend some time on basic concepts before tackling the more difficult topic of business cycles. The concepts of scarcity, making choices based on goals, productive resources, and the market system were studied two days per week using the *Trade-Off* films and spirit masters. These concepts were also emphasized at every opportunity in our regular textbook lessons on the development of the West and the rise of industry during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The first week of the semester my students were greeted with a large wall chart entitled "Hit Records." This sparked much interest, since students are not allowed to bring radios, cassettes, or records to school. They had just had the *Trade-Off* lesson "Malcolm Decides" and were aware of what constitutes good decision making.

Hoyt Andres, president and general manager of the local radio station, KHBM, visited our class and helped us determine the criteria for selecting five popular songs. These songs were charted weekly over the three-month period of February, March, and April and were used to illustrate the four phases of the business cycle. As a song rose on the charts, we called its path "recovery." When it reached the top ten, the song had reached "prosperity." As the song began to fall in sales and popularity, we called its path "recession," and when it dropped out of the top forty, it was in deep "depression."

After making our selections, the radio station supplied the weekly data for our chart. This activity was a tremendous success because it provided a practical application of decision making, and it promoted interest in business cycles.

During the first week in April, with the "Hit Records" activity in its third month and a better knowledge of basic economic concepts, the class was ready to begin the study of business cycles. This was accomplished using three chapters from our textbook over a six-week period.

The study followed a chapter on a period of increased spending by the federal government during World War I and the recession that followed. It covered the recovery and prosperous period of the mid-1920s and the recession and depression of the late 1920s and 1930s.

We also reviewed the basic differences in the market system and command system and analyzed data to determine what phase of the business cycle the economy was experiencing in May. Some of the activities follow:

1. Students read and discussed an article in *Junior Scholastic*, "The Soviet

Union: A New Era," by Deborah Gore. Classes discussed basic economic differences between the United States and the Soviet Union and completed a skills exercise on "Bread and Rubles." The students discovered that cycles only occur in the market system, in which individuals make economic choices.

2. Students read and discussed another article from *Junior Scholastic,* "Americans Out of Work," and completed a skills exercise on "Recession Blues."

3. Students contacted the Drew County office of the Arkansas Employment Security Division to gather data about unemployment in the county and state. The students discovered that since September, the unemployment rate had been higher for Drew County than for the state.

4. The Study Guide on Business Cycles was used to conduct a lesson on the different types of unemployment as applied to the local job market. A local automotive plant had closed, eliminating 300 jobs.

5. Students brought newspaper and magazine articles as they searched for data to determine the current trend in business activity. After much discussion, the class decided that since employment had improved slightly in the local area, and nationally that total output, inflation, housing starts, industrial production, and the stock market had all improved significantly nationwide, one could safely say that the nation was recovering from its recent recession.

6. Activity sheets were completed, with students answering the questions or following the instructions below:

(a) How did the cycles operate during the 1920s?
(b) Why did we have a Great Depression?
(c) What can we learn from the Great Depression?
(d) Read a picture graph on factory workers and wages, 1914–1933.
(e) Construct a line graph on U.S. spending patterns, 1922–1932.
(f) How did slow recovery lead to important economic changes?

7. Students conducted interviews with relatives, friends, or neighbors who had experienced the Great Depression. These interviews were extremely successful, not only from a cognitive viewpoint, but also because experiences, both social and economic, were shared that shortened the generation gap.

8. Kelton Busby, vice-president of a local bank and the Drew County chairman of the Arkansas State Council on Economic Education, paid us a visit. As a former teacher, he did an excellent job of explaining the role that banks have in the economy and answered many questions concerning the fluctuation of interest rates as they relate to business cycles.

9. Each of the four classes was assigned one of the four phases of the business cycle to further research. Each class then wrote and produced a skit showing the effects of their assigned phase on either the home, a business, or individual. Next to the record activity, this was the most successful in terms of participation and practical application. The skits were videotaped, and each class viewed its own production as well as those of the other three classes.

Concluding Activities

The following summarizes the final activities in the unit:

1. Students read an article from *Junior Scholastic,* "The Soviet Union: A New Era," by Deborah Gore. The class discussed economic differences between the United States and the Soviet Union and completed a skills exercise, "Bread and Rubles."
2. Students read an article in class from *Junior Scholastic,* "Americans Out of Work," and completed a skills exercise, "Recession Blues."
3. Students related in class discussion how the business cycles affect employment on a national and local level. They contacted the Drew County office of the Arkansas Employment Security Division to gather information about unemployment in the local area and the state.
4. Students used their Study Sheet on Business Cycles to determine the different types of unemployment and applied their knowledge to the local job market.
5. Students gathered newspaper and magazine articles to search for data to determine the current trend in business. Articles were brought to class, items discussed, and choices made.
6. Hoyt Andres, owner and manager of the local radio station, KHBM, made a return visit to see our "Hit Record" chart and discussed how the students' choices of songs in January reflected on our study of business cycles.
7. Houston Berryman, Veterans Employment Representative for the Arkansas Employment Security Division, spoke in an assembly in our auditorium to the four classes. He discussed how to make plans for a career and how choices made in the early stages of high school affect future jobs. He also discussed the local job opportunities and related them to business cycles.

Summary and Evaluation

Student learning in individual and group activities was evaluated in a number of ways. Since the study of business cycles did cover six weeks, tests were given during the project at appropriate intervals. The final post-testing was done in May, and the results were outstanding. On the teacher-made test on business cycles, students showed a 23 percent gain over the pretest. The *Junior High School Test of Economics,* given on a separate day, revealed a 15 percent gain.

Testing, however, was not the only measure of achievement. The enthusiasm of 100-plus eighth graders for a discipline that was new to most of them was a positive indicator. By the end of the semester, students were able to analyze, compute, and make goals using skills they did not previously possess. They could see, for instance, that they as consumers made choices that help determine our market, thus affecting economic trends. And finally, they had approached American history through economic concepts, and both disciplines had become much more meaningful.

Seventh Graders Create Games to Learn the Economics of Colonial America

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Background

Willets Road School is in a relatively small suburban community on Long Island. The parents of our diverse student body are mostly well-educated professional and business people. Consequently, the children are eager to learn, high achievers, well-traveled, and excited about new approaches to learning.

This game project was part of one segment (colonial life) of a ten-week, four-part unit on the colonial period: I–Colonization; II–Colonial life (political, religious, social, economic, and cultural institutions); III–Causes of the Revolution and the war; and IV–An in-depth examination of the two major documents of the times: The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The administration has always given me the freedom to experiment with creative teaching techniques and curriculum innovations; therefore, the addition of economic concepts and games to the colonial unit was supported.

For years, our seventh-grade students did not possess a simple economics vocabulary sufficient for reading and discussing economic news about economics in daily papers and in magazines. I noticed that our current events discussions seemed to lack that basic understanding. Teaching simple basic economic principles in the context of colonial life was the answer. Certainly it would be an exciting experiment! Improved economic understanding was my major goal.

Hadn't many of the original colonists come to America for economic reasons? Before the French and Indian War the colonists had been free to trade freely; then they lost their economic freedom. It was these events, inspired by the economics of the times, that were the catalysts that changed our country's history. They couldn't be ignored; so I incorporated these ideas into the curriculum.

Goals

There were three major goals for the unit:

1. To promote economic literacy by teaching basic economic principles applicable to the colonial period in U.S. history (1607–1775) and their application to today's world.
2. To help students understand that economic and political institutions were interrelated in the colonial era.
3. To provide students with a creative experience (games) and control over their own learning (concepts).

More specific concepts for the unit can be found in *Teaching Economics in American History,* Second Edition (Joint Council on Economic Education, 1984) by George G. Dawson and Edward C. Prehn, Topic I, "The Explorers and the Early American Colonies."

Procedures

Motivating forty-five seventh graders to get interested in learning about the economics of colonial America would not be an easy task. I created an interest in this by encouraging them to design games. The first step was to provide a two-week background in basic economics (principles, concepts, and vocabulary). Both the climate and geography were also important considerations in the overall understanding of the political atmosphere that led to the Revolutionary War. Students had already learned about the political, religious, and economic reasons that motivated the settlement of the colonies, and their locations, political organization, and way of life (two-week unit).

These concepts included the most important ways that the early settlers made a living and their major industries. The geography of the land and proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, in conjunction with the climate, were interrelated factors that also required teaching time. Foreign trade (products and routes) and the monetary system were the last topics that were discussed.

In addition, the youngsters were taught a few economic principles and concepts that applied to the early colonies: mercantilism, incentive/free labor, specialization (tobacco), inflation, productivity, profit motive, and the labor principle. The application of these principles to contemporary society and their own lives helped the students to gain a deeper understanding of these abstract ideas. They pondered the question: How can people increase their productivity?

The goal of the project was to create practical games which would be vehicles for teaching their classmates colonial economic concepts. The games needed a "catchy" title, a set of ten teacher-approved concepts, simple sequential rules, and a decorative cover. After two weeks of studying the concepts and doing the activity sheets, the group or individual games were completed and graded: effort and neatness (30 points), workability and rules (20 points), and concepts (50 points). Scores ranged between 90 and 100 percent.

Interest and application of these concepts were demonstrated by the students' colorful, creative board games, electrical games, and teaching machines.

The last week was devoted to playing games and evaluating the students' economic literacy. The youngsters in my two social studies classes played their own games and spent another period explaining them to the other social studies classes.

Evaluation

The next step was an evaluation of the three weeks' work in a three-part test: concepts, map skills (triangular trade routes), and application of economic literacy to a writing assignment (friendly letter). Their scores averaged five points higher than on other unit evaluations. The last and most important evaluation would come in the last two-week segment of the colonial unit when the students located the economic principles stated in the Declaration of Independence.

The two games that I sent to the Nassau County Consumer Youth Contest won second and third prizes in the games category. The three students received certificates at an awards ceremony attended by their parents and teacher. We decided that seventh graders are not too young to begin to develop the economic literacy necessary for better understanding of history and their contemporary world. "It was one of the best things that we did all year," remarked a student. I agree. It certainly was the most challenging to plan. Obviously, the idea can be utilized to create interest in any curriculum area, for any grade level, because all people enjoy playing games!

GOOD IDEAS IN BRIEF: JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL

WILLIAM J. STEPIEN, JAROLD MICHAEL, JOHN RYAN, RYAN SARTI, and GEORGIA TIERNEY, teachers in *Community Unit School District #300, Dundee, Illinois,* developed a simulation and inquiry approach to economic instruction utilizing the story line of *Economic Man,* first produced by the University of Chicago in the early 1970s. *Adam's Island* taught the basic concepts and skills of economics as enumerated by the Joint Council on Economic Education. Middle school students played the role of a young artist, Adam, shipwrecked on an island in the South Pacific. Adam learned about the ways wants motivated his behavior and the importance of natural, human, and tool resources to fulfilling his wants through production. When eleven other people arrived on the island, the minisociety learned how to pool their resources, how to specialize to decrease their productivity cost, how the interaction of supply and demand helped determine prices, and about the cost of resources. After three to four weeks of living on Adam's island, the students gained an extensive understanding of the role economic decision making plays in a society. The students were then "rescued" from the island as the first half of the program was completed. The second half of the six-week program opened with a news reporter beginning a four-part "special" on Adam's island — ten years later. A plant known as "nova," which slowed down the aging process, had been discovered on the island. The news special explored the effect the discovery had on the island. The importance of markets to manufacturers of nova and to the islanders who depend on imported goods was explored. The role of profit and loss in business ventures was examined, and the influence of supply and demand upon the price of goods arriving at the island was studied. The last lessons of Adam's Island dealt with global interdependence as illustrated by international trade. The activities that the students used as they played the role of Adam were of three types. First, they introduced basic economic concepts within the setting of the island. This controlled the complexity of the ideas. The second type of activity extended the understanding of the concepts to the personal lives of the students through consumer exercises. Lastly, activities were included that illustrated how the concepts were at work within our complex society.

THOMAS S. MARTIN and ROBERT H. JONES of the *Queensbury Junior High School, Glens Falls, New York,* developed an "Economics Awareness Program" for junior high students. It was a segment of a comprehensive career education program within the school district. This program was designed to enable students to deal realistically with themselves, and the economic awareness portion enabled students to function effectively within the economic structure in which they must live and work. Instruction was half traditional (lecture, classwork, questions and answers, etc.) and half activity oriented. This program developed students' understanding of the major components of the American economic system: the nature of economics, modern economic systems, characteristics of the American economy, and the organization of American capitalism. They also examined the challenges facing the American free enterprise system. Furthermore, the program provided students with opportunities to make economic decisions enabling them to practice the skills that are essential to our free enterprise system.

BRUCE JASPER of the *Hosterman Junior High School, New Hope, Minnesota,* developed the "Personal Financial Skills and Decision Making Unit" as the last unit of a year-long ninth-grade economics course. It was designed so that students would (1) review all basic economic concepts studied earlier, (2) apply the economic decision-making model studied earlier, and (3) study the essential personal economic skills, concepts, and generalizations necessary to participate successfully in our economy. Objectives for the unit were selected from the 1979 "Minnesota Task Force on Personal, Family, and Community Economics Learner Outcomes List," under the direction of Roger Wangen. Content and skill objectives were in the areas of money management, sources of income, budgeting, spending, savings, banks, financial institutions, credit, investment, insurance, consumer decision making, work, and leisure. To motivate students and to provide a realistic framework for personal economic decision making, a simulation approach was built into the unit. During each of the eight phases, economic topics such as credit, investments, fiscal policy, monetary policy, and the labor market were studied. Also during each phase students made economic decisions related to the topic. Students then saw that the content they studied was helpful in making wise financial decisions for a simulated family which each student represented. Students studied the labor market and found a job. They used the services of financial institutions to buy a house, buy a car, budget their salary, and make investments. Decisions made early in the unit (finding a job) influenced later decisions (buying a car and investments).

JACK R. HOUGE and PATRICK MULLEN, *Apollo High School, Saint Cloud, Minnesota,* team taught a semester-long economics unit to ninth graders. The school had purchased a very good text; but, because of budget cuts, did not have enough books for all students. The instructors devised a plan that allowed them to use the text efficiently. They developed Individualized Economics Enrichment Units—"From Canvas to Cut-Offs," "Money and Banking," "The Role of Government in the Economy," and "Our Economic System and Your Part In It." Depending on the ability of the students, they assigned various units to be completed. In their more advanced classes, they required all four to be completed. In some classes they assigned three and in others two. All work was to be done outside of class, and when the unit was completed students were to hand in their materials and take a quiz on the unit. They had to score 20 or better to pass. Each quiz had 25 items. Students could take it as many times as necessary. In most cases students scored 20 or better the first time. Each unit was color coded and provided explicit instructions to the student. The teachers were available in open labs to help students and to provide them with the quizzes when they completed a unit. The quizzes were also color coded and were machine scored. Various due dates were given to different classes. The color coding helped the teachers in their bookkeeping. With this method they were able to utilize a good resource (text) in a more efficient manner. It also allowed them to do other activities, simulations, case studies, films, etc. in class. The students responded very well to the individualized units. More than 1200 units were completed during this semester. The teachers pretested and post-tested their students, using the *Junior High School Test of Economic Understanding*. They had an overall 20% improvement. Much of that improvement was based on the Individualized Economics Enrichment Units.

RICHARD ENGLAR, a social studies teacher in *Owings Mills Junior-Senior High, Owings Mills, Maryland,* developed *The Spiralling Treadmill Game* for use in the ninth-grade economics unit of the Contemporary America course. This activity simulated basic features of our economic system that directly or indirectly cause *inflation*—corporate decisions, government legislation, wage contracts, and consumer behavior. The goal was to provide students with an intuitive understanding of fundamental economic concepts. Student players assumed socioeconomic roles in which they tried to achieve higher standards of living. The class was divided into representative groups of business leaders, industrial workers, government leaders, government employees, and "special citizens" who rely upon government social programs. Since one winner emerged from each subgroup, competition was directed towards other members of the same status. The game was played in turns. Each complete turn consisted of seven [illegible] in which players were involved in negotiating salaries, paying bills, and [illegible]ing prices. They then voted for government leaders and tried to influence their economic policies. Play gravitated around the cost-of-living index, in which prices tended to increase rapidly. As inflationary pressures increased, players redoubled their political and economic efforts to achieve their goals. The interaction between competing interest groups became more intense, as well as the distinction between "economic" and "political" activity. Government leaders were elected, economic policies announced, and prices adjusted to reflect the changing realities of this simulated society. The cycle thus repeated itself until students had experienced the effects of an inflationary cycle and the results of conflicting economic policies made "real" by legislation. Students who participated in this simulation were better able to describe causes of inflation and to list economic theories that addressed inflation. They also analyzed economic trade-offs and the effects of government taxation and fiscal policies upon inflation. Students described how groups in society attempted to influence the formation of economic policies. A brief, content-based test was included to evaluate students' attainment of specific economic concepts. Finally, changes in students' attitudes were effectively measured on the basis of post-game discussion and analysis of questionnaire data.

CHAPTER FOUR

On Teaching Economic Concepts in the Latin Class

Carrington Petras
Fort Defiance and Buffalo Gap High Schools, Augusta County, Virginia

Introduction and Rationale

Latin is a pervasive discipline. Its most obvious influence is seen in vocabulary studies, whether one is attempting to clarify one's knowledge of established derivatives like *space, number,* or *money,* or to create new and meaningful terms like *astronaut, computer,* or *mariculture.* Accordingly, this unit was designed with a strong etymological core, around which were woven economically oriented cultural background, mythology, archaeology, and comparison of ancient and modern economic systems.

Mindful of Cicero's admonition that those who do not know their past are still children, our own future leaders can only benefit from having their attention applied to such matters as the emperor Diocletian's attempts at wage and price controls (and their failure), or Hannibal's difficulties in obtaining supplies in foreign territory because of lack of support given him by the Carthaginian government.

Though it serves as a basic introduction to the kind of economy the ancient world depended on, this unit was also intended to drive home the point that money, as such, has no constant value, but is worth only what it can buy at a given time and in any given culture.

Overview

The unit was developed with the possibility of varied presentations in mind: portions of it could be closely integrated with daily lessons in the Latin classroom, the economic concepts presented as a part of the usual vocabulary, grammar, or cultural study; it could also be broken into segments and presented at appropriate times throughout the year; or the whole unit could be given as a distinct area of study, covering about a two-week span in fifty-minute periods per day, during which time the students would begin preparations for developing their own projects.

All these methods were used in varying degrees with different classes at the two schools concerned. Individual terms and background information were applied whenever the Latin text presented appropriate vocabulary and readings, but the main body of information in the unit was presented in lectures, discussions and group activities shortly after the beginning of the second semester of 1982-83.

Learning Activities

A pretest was given to determine the students' general familiarity with economic terms, whether as Latin derivatives or as a matter of practical knowledge. About 60 percent of the students scored below 50 percent on the pretest, and the answers prompted a lecture and discussion period on such things as the definition of money, the role of obsidian, salt, or iron bars in different places and periods in the ancient world, and the students' lively decision that something like metal coins as a medium of exchange was an inevitable invention because it was just too cumbersome to carry cows and goats about in one's toga.

Then we turned our attention to a poster, *Latin Is a Good Investment,* which we "happened" to have on our bulletin board. The modern coins pictured on the poster were examined and found to contain Latin mottoes and classical symbols. For instance, an 1885 U.S. silver dollar showed the motto *E Pluribus Unum,* "Out of Many, One," which we also found on nearly all the U.S. coins we later examined in an actual collection. Swiss coins on the poster were stamped with *Helvetia* and *Confoederatio Helvetica,* terms used by Julius Caesar in his *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars* to refer to the Swiss tribes. Fragments of other words with Latin endings and examples of Roman numerals were pointed out by the students as well as by the teacher.

Many other examples of classical influence were found while studying a collection of modern coins, from an 1880 U.S. silver dollar, not only stamped with *E Pluribus Unum,* but also with the head of Liberty (derived from *Libertas*) wearing an ancient Persian cap, to a 1952 South African quarter which identified George the Sixth as *Georgius Sextus Rex.*

The sometimes noble, sometimes ironic meanings of various classical motifs were noted in informal discussions; e.g., the 1943 Italian coin introduced the classes not only to the ancient *fasces,* the bundle of rods which were carried before Roman magistrates as a symbol of their power, but also to a realization that this symbol, with its protruding axe head, was taken somewhat too seriously by the modern Italian system of government known as fascism.

Particular attention was given to the design of the Great Seal of the United States, found on our federal reserve note. Those with one dollar bills in their pockets immediately compared them with the design flashed on the screen by the overhead projector, and murmurs of skepticism slowly gave way to the kind of comments which indicate what this teacher thinks of as "cultural appreciation."

The segment of the unit which was most visibly appreciated was the hands-on examination of copies of ancient coins. The students were very gratified at being able to recognize familiar designs and deities, to read some of the letters stamped on the coins, and to feel an actual connection with the reality of history which before had been mere stories in books. In conjunction with this activity, we compared the general types of coins used at different times and places in the ancient world, the denominations of Roman coins, the preference for one metal over another, and such matters as the changing value (especially owing to debasement and inflation) of coins because of political and international influences, like wars or the expansion of the empire.

The filmstrip *Midas and the Golden Touch* was shown, and though most students already knew the story, the historical basis for the tale and its economic moral were aspects which had not previously occurred to them. The fact that the legend came from Asia Minor, where metal coins were first minted, was recognized as an important point, and they also noted the relevance of the Midas myth to Aristotle's statement that ". . . money-making . . . is merely useful for the sake of something else," a statement which still holds true with regard to the value of money.

Further lectures were presented on the history of Roman economics, with continued reference to the changing values of certain ancient coins, the institution of slavery and its effects, the development of *latifundia,* the public dole, the military growth of Rome, and the economic interdependence between various ancient countries. These subjects, and others, were highlighted with a filmstrip, *Living in Ancient Rome*. This activity, and the discussions attending it, reinforced some of the concepts discussed earlier, and helped to show the students how so many seemingly disparate elements of study are actually related, especially that the same economic ideas relate to both ancient and modern societies.

The last audiovisual used was a public television show, *The Waters of Bath,* in which an archaeologist discovered thousands of ancient coins and other artifacts which shed light on the social, economic, and military conditions in Roman Britain from the first through the third centuries A.D. The students were struck by the film's use of phrases like "a coin which would buy a good glass of wine," a statement which is a much more accurate determination of an ancient coin's value than a phrase like "a coin equal to a dollar."

Maps were very useful aids throughout the presentation of the unit. For instance, during one of the introductory lectures, a map of ancient Italy was examined to see the relationship of Rome to the Tiber River, the sea, the old Salt Road, and the Tribes of various peoples—Etruscans, Oscans, Umbrians, etc.—who surrounded the city.

The fact that the map of any area changes over the centuries, depending on the political and economic situation, inspired several students to further study of ancient maps, to compare them with modern maps of the Mediterranean area, and to center their own projects around such studies.

Concluding Activities

The students were required to create individual projects based on some element in the unit which interested them. Among the suggested activities:

1. Research various classical authors to find out what they had to say about economics, either descriptions of the economics they lived under, or their ideas of what economics should be like. Such writers or personalities include Solon, the Athenian statesman; Draco, the Athenian lawgiver; Xenophon, who wrote the *Economics;* Cato, the Roman censor, who wrote *De Agricultura;* and the Gracchi, Roman reformers.
2. Prepare a map showing the spread of certain currencies or significant commodities throughout the Mediterranean world at various periods—the Bronze Age, the Roman Empire.
3. Make a word derivation chart showing the meanings of the names used for various Roman coins (e.g. *Sextans,* or a coin valued at 1/6 *as,* derives from *sex,* meaning six).
4. Research and compare the development of the Roman dole and the modern welfare system.

About one third of the students chose to base their own research projects on one of the ancient coins. One used two coins bearing the likeness of Alexander the Great as her starting point in depicting the campaigns of Alexander on a map and learning about his motives and the results of his travels. Several examined coins bearing symbols of their zodiac signs and researched the mythology behind the symbols or the history of the cities which had minted the coins. A few students chose to study the Roman military, how it was organized, how it was used, and the populations from which soldiers were drawn. A desire to investigate Roman engineering, which was executed with the use of slave labor in a command economy, led to maps of Roman roads and plans of Roman and Greek buildings.

Such projects also involved research and reports on the segments of Roman society which benefitted from the construction of roads and public baths. One project, which began with finding out what the censor Cato would do with slaves too old to work on a Roman farm, led to research on the kinds of crops grown in the ancient world and the way a Roman farm and villa were organized.

Evaluation

In addition to the students' own projects, each judged according to its merits, there were continued references to economic concepts whenever an opportunity was provided by the text or by general class discussion, even after the completion of the "economics unit." Thus, it was possible to include some questions relating to economics, however subtly, on each test given throughout the rest of the school year. For instance, several weeks after the completion of the unit, a question on the cultural cost of slavery elicited the response that "with slaves people do not need to make things easier for themselves, so technological improvements are not needed." The year's final exam contained several economics-oriented questions.

Generally, about 60 percent of the students taking these tests correctly answered all the questions relating to this unit; about 30 percent were consistently able to answer between 50 and 75 percent of the economics related questions; and of the remaining 10 percent, a few were able to handle only about a quarter of the questions, whereas three or four answered at least one question in a creative manner that showed genuine insight and appreciation for the concepts under consideration.

On the year's final exam, one student, answering a question about the myth of Midas, wrote that "riches are only as good as what you can get with them." The Latin students at Fort Defiance and Buffalo Gap high schools finished this unit knowing that one should not ask "what is a denarius worth?" but "what would a denarius buy?" at a given time in a given society. They have learned to understand that money functions simply as a medium of exchange, regardless of the historical setting.

The Westward Movement: The Cost of a New Beginning

Jayann Simpson
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Background

I am responsible for teaching a nine-week literature minicourse called "The Old West in Fact and Fiction." The course was originally designed as a high interest class for juniors and seniors with low ability and little or no motivation. I found that although most of my students had grown up in an age of television, they had not been steady watchers of western movies and, therefore, displayed little interest in the problems of those they considered so remote from themselves. I believed that before my students could understand the motivations and behavior of the pioneer characters in the stories to be read and discussed, they would have to relate to these characters.

I decided that the common interest needed would develop out of several key economic understandings and concepts which could be used to link the present with the past, therefore leading to a better understanding of the westward movement. The basic concepts which I focused on were scarcity, the need for decision making, opportunity cost, wants, supply and demand, and the need to exchange through barter and money. It was this thinking that led to the development of a two-week unit entitled "The Westward Movement: The Cost of a New Beginning."

Objectives

Because the minicourse is on literature, the primary objectives of the unit were to have the students demonstrate the ability to read and understand the several stories they were assigned to read; to analyze the motivations and behavior of the characters in the stories; and to be able to differentiate between the facts and legends of the westward movement in the United States. Secondary objectives focused on economic literacy. I wanted the students to demonstrate their understanding of the basic concepts and principles that were covered in the unit.

Materials and Teaching Methods

The following print and nonprint materials were used:

- "The Trap," an excerpt from the nonfiction account *Ordeal by Hunger,* by George R. Stewart;
- "The Travels of Jaimie McPheters," an excerpt from the novel of the same name by Robert Lewis Taylor;
- The first half of the film *The Real West;*
- A short lecture based on information included in *The Pioneers,* a volume in the Time-Life Old West Series;
- A role-playing simulation;
- A board game called Westward Ho, which was designed for the unit.

Because the unit was intended for students with limited or no motivation, I used several varied strategies for presenting the materials and content I wanted to cover. Since I had found that these students appeared to have difficulty in listening to lectures, I kept this approach to a minimum and only used it to introduce necessary facts and concepts. The most frequently used strategy was that of discussion, and at least half of the discussion questions were of a general nature. Students seemed more responsive as they were able to cite their own opinions and draw upon their experiences. A short research activity was assigned in order to allow students to discover certain information for themselves. I found that this assignment introduced students to materials related to the class but not formally covered in class. Finally, the role-playing simulation and board game allowed the students to become active participants in the decision-making process and gave them opportunities to make personal use of the information they had discussed.

Sequence of Activities

I presented this unit over a two-week period, beginning on a Monday. The first day was used to allow the students to relate what they thought they knew about the westward movement. Following this discussion, I introduced the film *The Real West,* by showing photographs of the narrator, Gary Cooper, in some of his roles in western movies. After we watched the film, we discussed the main ideas which had been presented.

The next day, I gave a short lecture about the western movement, telling students when it began, what routes the pioneers used to get to the West, and why the pioneers were motivated to make the journey. We then discussed the problems the pioneers faced. I introduced an excerpt, "The Trap," by showing students photographs of members of the Donner Party and outlining events that had occurred before the story began.

On the third day, the students were organized into groups of three or four and assigned a short research project that required each group to plan a journey to the West, as follows:

> "It is January 1849. You and members of your group have decided to move from your homes in Champaign County to the West. You have pooled your money and have a total of $1,500.00."
>
> 1. Decide your destination (Portland, Oregon; Sutter's Fort, California; Los Angeles, California; or San Diego, California).
> 2. What will you do when you get there? Why?
> 3. Choose from the following list the items which you will take on your journey. Circle the items you choose and indicate the amount of money to purchase each item. You will need supplies for a party of four.
> 4. Investigate the cost of each item you have selected, using reference books, old newspapers, old catalogs, etc. Make any changes necessary to remain within your means (total amount of money to spend). Make final listing of the items and the amounts you will take with you.

I then listed a number of items under the following categories: bedding, cooking utensils, food, clothes, weapons, tools and equipment, handy articles, luxuries. I also stipulated that each group had to have a wagon and eight draft animals, and could also have saddle horses.

This activity served several purposes: students developed a better understanding of the problems encountered by the pioneers on the westward trails, and they were provided a realistic exercise giving them the opportunity to grasp the concepts of scarcity, decision making, and opportunity costs.

Our discussions of "The Trap" lasted two days. We summarized the events described and discussed the members of the Donner Party. We pointed out the choices made and discussed reasons for the decision members of the party had made. At this point, I focused on the concept of opportunity cost as we discussed how each choice made by the Donner Party was narrowed by the few alternatives available. We talked about how the values and objectives of the members had changed during their ordeal, and this led to a discussion of scarcity, exchange, barter, and wants. Finally, we talked about the factors which led to the tragedy and how it might have been avoided.

Following this, we read and discussed the story "The Travels of Jamie McPheters," using the same ideas brought out by the previous story. I then introduced the concepts of supply and demand as they were brought out in the story. We discussed the reasons for the scarcity of food and tools in the gold fields and talked about the kinds of people who exploited opportunities brought about by the situation.

About midway through the unit, we had a summary discussion that served to bring out that barter had been used as a means of exchange in both stories. We talked about the fact that food and water became more valuable than cash or family heirlooms to people who were starving or dying of thirst. We also talked about the eventual coming of mining companies into the gold field and the reasons behind this development.

I presented a role-playing simulation which placed each student in a position of leadership in a wagon train faced with the dilemma of having insufficient food to reach its destination, as described below:

> You and 19 other people are traveling across the desert on your way to Santa Fe. You are about 30 days from your destination and your supply of food has run dangerously low. Although you have plenty of water, you have not been able to find any game or other source of food.
>
> Decide what you would do. Write an essay explaining your decision and your reasoning.
>
> People on your wagon train:
>
> 1. You (enough food to reach Santa Fe);
> 2. The McGraney Family: Joshua and Helen and their children, Sarah and Jedidiah. Josh and Helen are in their late thirties; Sarah and Jedidiah are teenagers (Enough food to last 10 days if they are careful.);
> 3. Elijah and Alice Windsor, early seventies, and their son, Thaddeus, mid-thirties (enough food to last 1 week);
> 4. The Bartons: Seth and Lucinda, early forties; their daughter, Lucy, and her husband, Tom Andrews, early twenties, and their children, Tommy and Ann, ages 5 and 7; the Bartons' son, Bob, and his wife, Mary, mid-twenties, and their children, Charles, 10, Laura, 12, Virginia, 8, and infant Jacob. (Enough food to last 1 week.)
>
> If you combine all of the food, you will have enough for the entire group for 15 days, 20 at the most, and only if you go on starvation rations. What is your decision and why?

I ended the unit with a board game called "Westward Ho." This served as the concluding activity. The object of the game was for each group to reach one of the four destinations that were used in our earlier group activity. Each group followed appropriate trails, such as the Oregon, the Santa Fe, and the Mormon. The team which arrived at its ultimate destination with the greatest amount of supplies and money was declared the winner. The game was structured so that each group departed from either Independence or Navoo. By throwing a die, the groups advanced or landed on "Pitfalls" (snowslides, steep cliffs, heavy rains, etc.) and "Wheel of Fortune" spaces. Cards were provided to describe events labeled "good fortune" or "bad fortune." The game involved many decisions and also brought in realistic elements of chance. It also served to utilize the materials from the research project and from the many class discussions.

Evaluation

I evaluated the students on the basis of their participation in class discussions, their group project, their compositions describing their decisions in the role-playing dilemma, and their achievement on a fifty-question objective test that covered the lecture and two stories. There is no question that the students participated enthusiastically and in a great number of discussions, which indicated their understanding of the westward movement in American history. I am also pleased to state that their grades were significantly better than usual because they were motivated and interested in all that we accomplished in the unit.

YES: Your Economic System

YES Committee*
St. Petersburg Senior High School, St. Petersburg, Florida

Introduction

YES is a course that we developed as an interdisciplinary project of the business, home economics, and social studies departments at St. Petersburg Senior High School in St. Petersburg, Florida. The semester course was offered to tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. Proctor, Rudge, and Wortock conducted the course. A cadre of teachers acted as a support team for program and curriculum development.

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*YES Committee members included Steve Knellinger, registrar; Dave Walters, occupational specialist; Business Department member Tom Proctor; Elizabeth Royak, editor; Home Economics Department members Ann Blazer, Eleanor Myers, and Kathy Rudge; Social Studies Department members Susan Cooper, Don Walker, Valencia Walker, and Bill Wortock. Linda McPheron served as economic education resource teacher.

Goals and Objectives

The concept that we wished to promote in creating this new course was the interrelatedness of economic concepts in all areas of life. This is what made us choose to work on the course as an interdisciplinary effort.

The YES course fulfilled several objectives for both teachers and students:

- Students were shown the interconnectedness and application of economic concepts as well as the complementary nature of previously unrelated subjects.
- Students benefited from instruction that assisted them in becoming active, informed consumers.
- Students received the best information that each discipline had to offer.
- Interrelating the school and business, businesses' view of the school, and the students' view of both as part of the "real world."
- Resources within both the school and community were identified and utilized.
- Teachers on the workshop team improved their level of curricular and instructional knowledge.

Planning

To attain our objectives, we formed a committee that consisted of two representatives from the administration; several teachers from the Business, Home Economics, and Social Studies departments; and the occupational specialist. The committee met prior to the course to determine the goals and objectives desired and the methods to be employed.

Three teachers, one from each department, were selected to teach the course. The administrative representatives coordinated the enrollment and scheduling. The occupational specialist worked with all members to arrange speakers and special activities.

All committee members gathered information and materials and then developed lesson plans and activities. We organized the subject matter to meet and exceed state-mandated economic objectives, and devised an outline to designate particular objectives to a department. The activities we developed were then compiled into a teacher handbook.

We needed a way to encourage students to enroll in the course, especially since many were not inclined to take a course in economics. We asked the drama department to develop a film "commercial" to help us recruit students. The film, *Say Yes to YES,* was shown schoolwide prior to registration.

During the semester, the participating teachers met approximately every two weeks to coordinate lessons, speakers, and activities, and to monitor student progress. Other committee members were called on as needed to assist with planning.

At the end of the semester, we met to make revisions and improvements to the course. The handbook was updated to be a guide for teachers who may not be sure of what to teach in a course on economics, especially since there was no text to rely on. We also planned a seminar for other high schools in the county which were interested in implementing the course.

Organization of the Class

During the first week, the class met for an inaugural activity. The course format was explained, common goals and objectives were presented, and group activities were conducted. Each student received a packet of materials to be used throughout the course. The packet included a pretest, glossary, charts, and articles. Each student was also given a subscription to a business magazine in lieu of a textbook.

The students then attended three six-week modules, each with a different teacher (Table 1). The modules presented economic concepts from the viewpoint of each department. The lessons for these modules were taken from the handbook we had compiled, and from each teacher's own preparations. For economy and efficiency, we conducted many activities, such as field trips presentations by guest speakers, for all three classes at one time to take advantage of guest speakers and field trips.

At the end of the semester, the group met again for a concluding activity that synthesized all the economic concepts presented in the course.

Resources

Instead of a textbook, we decided to use a news magazine as our primary source of current economic events. Only one classroom set was needed, as the

TABLE 1

YES—Your Economic System
An Interdisciplinary Economics Course

Subject and Topic	First Six Weeks	Second Six Weeks	Third Six Weeks
Business: The Financial World	Class A	Class C	Class B
Home Economics: Personal Economics	Class B	Class A	Class C
Social Studies: Principles of Economics	Class C	Class B	Class A

This matrix shows the rotation schedule of the class. Initially, the students meet as a group. They then attend three six-week modules, each with a different teacher. The focus and content of each module depend on the subject.

magazines were rotated among the classes. Using the magazine as a text proved rewarding; there was never a lack of economic examples for each of the subject areas or concepts.

In order to offer the students the best information available, we established an economics resource center in our school library. Students and teachers had access to books, periodicals, research materials, and other information.

We made use of the Center for Economic Education at the University of South Florida. Many films, games, and learning activities were available for our use in the classroom. The center also provided expert help, as did our county economic education resource teacher.

Teachers expanded their level of knowledge by researching economic topics, and selecting and pooling materials for the class. Five of our committee members, prompted by their resulting interest, took college-level courses in economics.

We also expanded our use of resources in the community. Speakers were invited to present their views to the class, field trips were planned, and many students participated in a career-shadowing day. These resources presented a view of economics in everyday life.

Evaluation

Students took a pretest at the beginning of the semester to determine their level of economic knowledge. At the end of the semester, students took a final exam as a post-test. This test was constructed from a test bank from the Center for Economic Education at the University of South Florida. Over half of the students scored 85 percent or better on the final exam.

Students developed a greater knowledge of economics, as evidenced by participation in class and objective test scores. The ties between economic principles and almost all aspects of life were clear to most. This affected their decision making as consumers. We can only tell how well integrated these concepts have become by the future decision making and actions of the citizens of our community, state, and nation.

Another benefit of the course was the spirit of cooperation developed from this project. The success of our interdisciplinary project fostered interest from other teachers and administrators, and encouraged them to work together.

The Saga of Bernsville: An Economic Parable

Scott Harvey
Beverly Hills High School, Beverly Hills, California

Introduction

Too often, following a semester course in micro/macroeconomics, my students were overwhelmed by the size and complexity of economic systems; yet they were sufficiently confident to think they could safely take to pieces, and put together at their pleasure, a new economic order. Thus, I adapted an economic parable as a concluding project to help my students apply their newly acquired tools of economic reasoning.

The Saga of Bernsville is the story of an idyllic economy so isolated, provincial, and remote from the rest of the world that it had no formal government, labor unions, unemployment, or inflation, and its inhabitants had never even heard of money.* For the past 200 years, although totally isolated, Bernsville had enjoyed economic prosperity. But from the moment on Black Tuesday when Homer, our Paleolithic hero, decided to open a Hard Rock Savings Account, we traced the events of concomitant injection and withdrawal of savings and investments by Bernsville's workers and its capitalist, who owned the local bread factory, in their attempt to fight unemployment, inflation, shortages, and surpluses.

The students were quick to chart, graph, and calculate changes in the economy of Bernsville as the cycle of idyllic prosperity was followed by recession and depression. With each turn of events in the seven chapters of the saga, the students gave me information about changing economic conditions in Bernsville. Each economic choice by Homer and the capitalist led to further queries, such as "Why did Homer's decision to save some of his wages result in unemployment in Bernsville?"

One of the revelations of the Saga of Bernsville was not the quantity of information that we were able to give each other concerning the economy of Bernsville, but rather the quality of students' questions stemming from the data. The project embodied motivation through the use of parody, divergence in making choices, and innovative thinking during the problem-solving exercises.

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*Original entry included the seven-chapter sage, economic flow charts, and objective quiz questions and answers.

Overview

The Saga of Bernsville was a concluding project for my senior students, who are enrolled in a one semester economics course which introduced the principles and concepts of micro- and macroeconomics. The project was completed in two weeks, including classroom work and several hours of homework. The students read a seven-chapter story about a mythical economy, completed a flow chart of economic activity for the conditions presented in each chapter, and were tested on how accurately they calculated changes in GNP, employment, wages, and prices. After completing the seven chapters of the story we revisited Bernsville, and formed city councils which developed monetary and fiscal policies for the revival of Bernsville's ailing economy. Each city council submitted a supporting document which analyzed the economic implications and effectiveness of its policies.

Social, cognitive, and academic skills were developed during the assignment, especially when we formed the city councils, which required students to assess economic problems of equity and efficiency, formulate policies to solve disequilibria in the marketplace, and calculate the costs and benefits of fiscal and monetary policies proposed by the city councils. Finally, I conducted a discussion and question session on the assignment in terms of the effectiveness of the proposals for government intervention in the marketplace suggested by the various city councils.

Objectives

After completing the assignment on the Saga of Bernsville, students were able to:

1. Describe the factors which determine the number of workers hired by a business.
2. Explain how and why changes in wage rates affect the quantities of labor services demanded by a business.
3. Explain how and why changes in wage rates affect the quantities of labor services supplied by workers.
4. Explain fluctuations in employment rates.
5. Calculate the costs and benefits of monetary policy, the fiscal policies of taxation, borrowing, wage and price control, and other forms of government involvement in the marketplace.
6. Calculate Gross National Product (GNP), by the income and expenditure methods, from a given set of data.
7. Trace causes of disequilibrium in the marketplace.

Organization and Procedures

The Bernsville assignment was divided into five parts, which required each student to accomplish the following:

1. Read a seven-chapter myth concerning the economy of a tiny village called Bernsville.

2. Complete a circular flow chart of economic activity in Bernsville, which served as a student worksheet for analysis and interpretation of changing economic conditions described in each chapter of the story.
3. Calculate changes in GNP, employment rates, and wages and prices.
4. During the Bernsville Revisited portion of the assignment, at the conclusion of parts 1 through 3, the class completed a problem-solving exercise. The students were divided into five-member city councils which developed fiscal and monetary policy proposals for the revival of Bernsville's economy. Each council included a cost and benefit analysis of its intervention in the marketplace.
5. Student participation in a concluding discussion session, in which I discussed the implications and effectiveness of the various city councils' economic recovery plans.

Results

When we revisited Bernsville, the students again encountered the old economic nemesis of scarcity, forcing them to make choices, establish trade-offs, and determine priorities. Students were divided into five-member city councils, which submitted written recommendations of monetary and fiscal policies for solving Bernsville's dire economic problems. Each city council report contained a cost and benefit analysis of the government's intervention in the marketplace. For example, one city council report examined ten types of taxes that could be levied on Bernsvillians, classified the taxes as progressive, regressive, or proportional, indicated which members of the community would gain or lose in the short term, and described long-term effects of such tax policies.

Students learned to decide rationally whether a specific government intervention is part of the solution or part of the problem. Toward this end, I emphasized how students earn, spend, save, and invest throughout their lives. When the objectives of the lesson were achieved, I found students better prepared to address economic problems which require resolution as well as new economic issues requiring students to act intelligently in less familiar circumstances.

During the project, selected students prepared charts depicting the seven days of economic activity in Bernsville, including graphs on wages, unemployment, savings, investments, GNP, and the production and consumption of bread. One student wrote a computer program of the Bernsville assignment for our school computer system, while another student wrote a computer program for the Apple IIe. The project could be modified to meet a variety of economic problems, utilizing various skill levels and involving different age groups.

Evaluation

I assessed each student's contribution to our discussion sessions, and administered objective tests in which students repeatedly calculated changes in GNP, inflation, wages and prices, and unemployment, and production. I believe that the Saga of Bernsville increased the economic literacy of my students and made them more aware of fundamental economic issues and problems, not solely as sociopolitical phenomena, but also as the product of basic economic forces and institutions at work in the marketplace.

GOOD IDEAS IN BRIEF: SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

KENNETH L. RIPP, an economics teacher in *Memorial High School, Eau Claire, Wisconsin,* in response to extensive media coverage of business cycle news developed a program designed to investigate such questions as: What causes business to fluctuate? Can people learn to anticipate business cycle changes and related events on their lives? Why does the stock market change? and Why the roller coaster ride? "Up, Down, Sideways: A Simulation of a Business Cycle," a computer simulation (for use with Apple computers), was designed to help students better understand why the business cycle fluctuates. The students participated in small-group decision making as they assumed the role of managers for firms in an oligopolistic industry. Through the seven rounds programmed in the simulation, the students made employment and production decisions based on the "current state" of the economy and their industry. The students were introduced to key economic concepts such as the business cycle, unemployment, investment, Gross National Product, inflation, and the effects of fiscal and monetary policies. Graph reading skills, math skills, and analytical thinking exercises were also practiced in the simulation. The activity was designed to take from three to seven 50-minute class periods. The computer simulation has been used as an introduction to the study of economic growth and stability, but could be developed into a complete unit. The simulation was developed for students in grades 10–12.

DAVID E. O'CONNOR, a social studies teacher at the *Edwin O. Smith School, Storrs, Connecticut,* devised a one-year junior-senior elective entitled "Economic Understanding: An Exploration of American Economic Goals". Its focus was on the American economic system—its origins, structure, and economic goals as well as economic issues and problems related to these goals. Five instructional units were developed. Four of these units, which spanned approximately one-third of the academic year, provided necessary background for students. Unit I, "The Economics of Energy," introduced basic economic concepts, including the basic economic problem of scarcity (3 weeks). Unit II, "Economic Systems," explored how the basic types of economic systems, including traditional, command, and market economies, respond to the basic economic problem and to the basic economic questions (4 weeks). Unit III, "The American Market Economy," focused on the evolution of the market system and on its application in America (4 weeks). Unit IV, "The American Consumer," dealt with the role of consumers in the American economy (3 weeks). The fifth and final unit of the year, "The Goals of the American Economic System," took up the remaining two-thirds of the year. It examined economic issues, problems, and topics related to six major economic goals of the United States. "Economic Efficiency" examined the operation of the industrial workplace (4 weeks). "Economic Growth" focused on the problems faced by the developing world in achieving growth, and on America's struggle to maintain its competitive edge (4 weeks). "Economic Freedom" explored the types of freedoms enjoyed by businesses, investors, and laborers in a market or mixed economy (6 weeks). "Economic Security" or "Economic Equity" (justice) dealt with the conflicts inherent in poverty persisting amidst affluence (3 weeks). Finally, "Economic Stability" reflected on various government policies designed to fight economic fluctuation, including monetary policy, fiscal policy, and wage-price controls (4 weeks). The overriding objective of the course was to provide students with sufficient background in economic history and principles, along with competence in the processes of critical thinking and analysis necessary in order to make economic decisions and evaluate economic policies. The inclusion of current economic issues also enlivened the study, and provided useful preparation for the practice of effective citizenship.

BONNIE LILLIBRIDGE and DAVID PUTINSKI, business education teachers in the *Wickliffe High School, Wickliffe, Ohio,* developed a unit that used a game focused on employment and key economic concepts. Designed after the popular "Pac Man," the board game motivated students and held their interest throughout the semester. The unit, called "Is Economic Eddy Employable?" was geared for high school students but could be used as well with middle school students. The unit was organized into six categories of study: attitudes and values, decision making, labor supply and demand, the employment process, employment trends, and gender equality. The game board was divided into six color-coded areas to correspond with the six topics. Each area included both required and optional activities. The required activities allowed the students to clear two dots on the board and the optional assignments allowed participants to clear middle-sized dots or large power dots depending on the difficulty of the activity. Students were awarded points for the number of dots cleared. Top point earners were invited to lunch by local business executives, middle point earners were awarded certificates for lunch at a local pizza shop, and low point earners received McDonald's gift certificates.

DAVID NORFLUS, an economics teacher in *Newtown High School, Elmhurst, New York,* developed a course of study designed to encourage students to make objective, reasoned decisions. Since his students were primarily foreign-born, with dissimilar levels of competency, he had to devise a variety of different strategies to incorporate the concept of decision making. Bearing in mind that reasoning is not a doctrine, but a technique of thinking that helps its practitioners to draw correct conclusions but does not offer ready-made solutions or final answers, he attempted to encourage his students to incorporate the decision-making process in all the topics being studied. At the outset of this course of study, students were introduced to key economic terms and economics. Students were asked to write editorials, letters to the editor, or essays on a variety of economic topics that involved reasoning. In addition, students were asked to analyze economic cartoons, supporting or opposing the point of view of the cartoonist, and also to create their own cartoons on economic subjects. Students also engaged in activities involving verbal, organizational, research, and reasoning skills, including role playing, simulation, debates, press conferences, classroom trials, etc. Other activities included doing term papers, case studies, charts, and book reviews as well as analyzing newspaper editorials. Students were also sent out into the community to survey and interview local residents.

MERRY MATTSON, a business teacher at *Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota,* developed a unit entitled "Who Owns This Restaurant?" for a semester-long introductory business course. The unit was designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice, illustration and experience, and between consumers and business proprietors. Students learned the differences, advantages, and disadvantages of various forms of business ownership through interviews with local restaurant managers/owners. Using a "business lunch" setting, groups of five or six students asked the owners or managers about profits, the economy capital, and future planning. The unit increased the students' awareness of the various forms of business ownership besides providing an opportunity to integrate the key economic concepts learned in class with real-life experiences. Prior to visiting local restaurants, the students had studied general business and economic concepts and had reviewed the forms of business ownership. Each group, in its field-trip phase, went to a restaurant with a different form of ownership. An in-class seminar followed at which the groups presented and discussed the information gathered. During this time, all students heard about each other's experiences as they discussed the similarities and differences in the various ways the businesses had responded to the interview questions. Follow-up discussions frequently arose after the unit was completed. For example, when one of the restaurants visited went bankrupt, a classroom discussion on bankruptcy ensued. At the conclusion of the course, students rated this unit as one of the most worthwhile and interesting activities covered during the semester.

BILLYE COEY, a civics teacher at *Cibola High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico,* developed a unit called "Starting a New Town." The five-day project was designed to conclude a unit on the basic principles of economics. The activity allowed the students to apply the economic concepts of scarcity and choices, opportunity cost and trade-offs, government intervention and regulation, and government distribution of revenue. The first day of the activity was used to show "Give and Take" (Program 4 in the Joint Council's TV-film series *Trade-Offs*). We then discussed the dilemma faced by the city council in the film as they considered spending $100,000 of revenue to meet community needs. Students then completed a survey entitled "Allocating Local Resources." This enabled them to rank a list of community expenditures according to their personal value systems. A discussion followed, centered on personal values and economic decisions. The second day was used to assign students roles in a simulation activity. The roles included those of mayor, four city councilors, retired citizens, various types of families, students, and businesspersons. The citizens then held small group meetings to discuss their needs and problems as given in their role assignments. Each group selected two representatives to present the most pressing issues at a city council meeting. At the conclusion of the presentations, each councilor prepared a proposed budget, allocating revenues of the newly formed town. The budget proposals were presented on the fourth day, and after much discussion, the city council voted on a final budget. The concluding activity was a class evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the budget and the difficult decisions faced by the local officials. Students expressed a new understanding of the problems involved in meeting unlimited community wants with limited revenues. Many alternative proposals were made suggesting the use of volunteers and more cooperation with business and industry as well as with nearby communities. Students also demonstrated an increased appreciation of the diverse needs of a variety of citizens and the difficult challenges of decision making related to the allocation of public money.

JAMES R. WALTHER, teacher of a government class in the *Richardson High School, Richardson, Texas,* organized a simulation game to teach comparative economic systems in a manner which proved to be enjoyable, challenging, and highly informative. One of the major objectives of the activity was to encourage students to become involved with teaching themselves while having fun. With the United Nations as an organizational format, students practiced research skills, group work skills, individual debate skills, and experienced situations in which innovation and creative thinking and performance were rewarded. The United Nations format provided a vehicle for how the three major world economic systems operate. At the same time, the format gave the students an opportunity to study and understand the U.N. Various methods of presenting factual information were also used to cover the spectrum of learning styles of the students. The intent was to stimulate interest and increase participation, all resulting in a better understanding of the materials covered. Methods included audio and visual presentations, individualized, self-paced learning, and verbal and written presentations. The simulation was highly successful in that slow students enjoyed and experienced success, and average students were challenged. Most important, all students, at all levels, enjoyed themselves as they learned about capitalism, socialism, and communism: how each system came about; how each system operates; and how they relate to each other, to the world today, and to the students.

Open Category*

CHAPTER FIVE

Buying a Home

Hannah Peer Gallier
Mills E. Godwin High School, Richmond, Virginia

Introduction

Some of the most important economic decisions made in an individual's lifetime are those decisions involving investments in real estate. This investment has the advantages of being an investment in the sense that it gives a return on the original amount spent, but it also satisfies the basic needs of shelter and a place of refuge and enjoyment; consequently, there are many emotional intangibles involved in this investment.

This unit was prepared for an introductory business class at Mills E. Godwin High School in Henrico County, Virginia, located in the suburbs of the city of Richmond. The school is five years old and situated in a middle to upper-middle class neighborhood. The students in the class ranged from ninth to twelfth grades. The unit lasted approximately three weeks. It covered economic principles previously studied—money, scarcity, free enterprise, supply and demand, and labor.

Objective

The objective of the unit was to prepare the students for the basic steps involved in purchasing real estate. Although this was not an economic decision that the students would be making soon, it was tailored so that they would be familiar enough with the process to ask the right questions and find the right answers when the time came for them to purchase a home. I drew on my experience in buying my own home and previous employment as a real estate broker to build a unit that covered the basic steps in buying a home. I did not go too deeply into real estate financing which is constantly changing and probably will be quite different when the students buy a home. Some of the secondary objectives were learning how real estate taxes are calculated, learning how interest rates affect monthly payments, and understanding the factors involved in building an energy-efficient home.

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*The "Open Category" is a relatively new addition to the National Awards Program for the Teaching of Economics to encourage educators whose responsibilities are not defined by traditional grade-level distinctions to submit projects to the awards program, e.g. school librarians, curriculum supervisors, and school administrators. Such individuals frequently have multigrade and/or schoolwide or school district responsibilities.

Learning Activities

You've got to know the language! We started the unit by learning basic real estate terms. Most of the definitions for the terms had to be found in law and real estate books. Some of the new words and concepts covered were real estate contract, earnest money, title insurance, deed, title search, "cloud" on title, amortization schedules, P.I.T.I. (principal, interest, taxes, and insurance), appraisal, and gross and net income.

The next learning activity involved a handout on a hypothetical family, Joan and Tom Miller and their children, who were prospective home buyers. The students received a handout (Exhibit 1) about the family and were asked to think of a home that would meet the family's needs and desires.

The next activity introduced the concept of four-to-one ratio in qualifying buyers for a mortgage loan. Since very few people can afford to pay all cash for a new home, qualifying a buyer for the amount of the mortgage is a necessary step in buying a home. Qualifying a buyer is the process of deciding how much of his or her monthly income a buyer can safely pay on a mortgage loan. Everyone needs money for other things besides a home: for clothing, food, automobiles, insurance, education, medical bills, recreation, and many other items. If payments were too high relative to a buyer's income and the house-

EXHIBIT 1

Joan and Tom Miller have sold their home in Fairfax County because he has been transferred to his company's home office in Richmond. Joan was a buyer for a nationally known department store in the Fairfax area. She has found it easy to transfer to a branch of the store in the Richmond area. Tom has an annual income of $35,000; Joan, $20,000. Joan and Tom have two teenage children: Mike, who is eighteen, and Debbie, a sixteen-year-old.

The Millers have decided to buy a home rather than rent. Real estate has been a good investment for them in the past; they like owning their home and feel that the deduction on their income tax for interest paid on the mortgage makes a home a particularly good investment for them.

They want a new home in a neighborhood convenient to shopping, schools, and work. They lead an active social life, and the entire family participates in sports: swimming, golf, and tennis.

They are interested in an energy-efficient home and will want to ask the real estate agent about insulation and other energy-saving features. They would like a fireplace so that they can use a wood-burning stove to supplement the other heat.

hold fell behind in payments as a result when unexpected expenses arose, the buyer could lose everything. One way of qualifying a buyer is to apply the four-to-one rule: according to that rule, the mortgage payment should not exceed one-fourth an individual's monthly gross income less monthly payments on long-term debt.

Gross income and long-term versus short-term debts were explained, and then the Millers' income and debts were examined to determine the amount they could safely pay per month for a mortgage loan. The monthly payment included principal, interest, taxes, and insurance. The next learning activities included lessons on determining real estate taxes and comparing our county taxes with those of surrounding counties and cities.

We used rate books supplied by a savings and loan association to determine the price range of a home for the Millers. After qualifying them by using the four-to-one ratio, we found that they could make payments of approximately $1,000 per month. Since the Millers' $30,000 from the sale of a previous home was used as down payment, we found that they could afford a home of approximately $100,000.

The point was emphasized that buyers do not always choose to buy the most expensive home they can afford. The qualifying process is intended simply to make sure a buyer who can only afford to make payments on a $50,000 house, will not try to buy one for $200,000.

Concluding Activity

The unit ended with an all-day field trip. The students viewed three homes, wrote a sales contract, applied for a loan at a savings and loan association, and attended a real estate closing at an attorney's office.

The students made up a check sheet as a class activity, deciding what the Millers wanted in a house and what we would look for when viewing the houses. The list included lot size, age of house, type of heat, square footage, number of bedrooms, appliances included, energy-saving features, type of construction, etc. We only looked at new construction, since I thought it would not be a good idea for so many people to tour occupied homes. The students reached a unanimous decision on the home they felt was right for the Millers. With the help of a real estate broker, we wrote a sales contract. The real estate broker went through the contract step by step. We used a fair amount of the terminology previously studied in class to understand the legal agreement.

The second phase of the field trip was a visit to the savings and loan association. The loan service officer explained the importance of a good credit record, methods of qualifying buyers, and current interest rates.

The final stage of the field trip was a visit with a real estate attorney. The attorney had a closing statement already prepared that showed the closing cost for both borrower and seller for a transaction very similar to our purchase that day. He explained the attorney's role in the real estate buying process. He explained the attorney's duties in examining the sales contract, searching title, and bringing everything together, such as homeowner's policies, title insurance, etc., for the final closing. After the field trip, the students wrote reports on buying a home.

One of the most important learning activities covered in the unit was a lesson on how interest rates affect mortgage loans. We compared a $50,000 mortgage loan at 12½ percent for 30 years and found that the payment was $534 per month, and the same mortgage at 17 percent was $713. This showed why so many people cannot afford to buy housing when interest rates rise. We carried this a step further to show how much monthly income one would need to qualify for each one of these amounts.

Summary Comments and Evaluation

This was one of the most enthusiastically received units that I have prepared and taught. The students were very interested in being wise buyers and contributed a great deal to the many parts of the unit. When the activity was measured by conventional means, the final test and project showed a grasp of real estate terms, legal terms, ability to qualify a buyer, and computational ability in figuring taxes. Some of the other benefits of this unit were not so easily measured, like working with community professionals, visiting offices in businesslike situations, and making judgments requiring economic insight. All of these activities helped the students in the process of growing in an understanding of our economic system.

Changes! What Causes Them? The Study of the Relationship between Changes and Economics

Sue Devero
Southside High School, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Rationale and Introduction

How could a high school coordinator of marketing and distributive education interest her students in economics? I wondered! The students are not at all interested in it at the beginning of the school year. They assume it is boring and has nothing to do with them personally. Would trying to prove that a thesis statement made by their teacher was *wrong* get them "hyped up" in a study of economics? It would definitely be worth a try!

Basically this was the "tool" used for this project. After doing a great deal of research and thinking, I was completely convinced the following thesis statement was correct: Life is a process of continuous change. All changes in life are related to economics. Therefore, a person needs to understand economics in order to prepare for inevitable changes.

Human beings can make mistakes so it was obvious to me there would be a possibility my students could prove me wrong. That was perfectly all right. If the chance to locate a change that was totally unrelated to economics would be an incentive for my students to delve deeply into a study of economics, being proved wrong would be well worth it.

This project was set up in three phases: *Phase One* involved the introduction of economic concepts to the students through teacher/student discussions, classroom activities, films, pamphlets, etc. *Phase Two* included intensive research done by the students on changes which had occurred in their personal lives, changes in the lives of their parents and grandparents, and changes in transportation, real estate, religion, education, athletics, crime, clothing, business operations, entertainment, government, health care, finance, food, and communications. *Phase Three* was the concluding activity. It was a seminar which included a film on changes which had occurred in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, and a lecture by an economist, Dr. Mollie Wilson, on economic concepts, the Federal Reserve System, economic projections followed by a question/answer session between her and the students. Phase Three also included an unexpected analysis of the issue of the publication *U.S. News & World Report* centered on economic projections for the future.

My students cherished the opportunity to try to prove that my thesis statement was *wrong*. They had never had the chance in the past to deliberately try to disprove their instructor. In order to try to accomplish their self-established goal to prove my statement incorrect, they had become heavily involved in the study of economics because at the beginning of the school year they had only a scanty knowledge of economics. Fortunately for me, they did not prove the statement incorrect. More fortunately, the students learned a vast amount of economics.

The students had a pretest of their economic understanding by participating in a simulation of an oral debate/quiz between TV news commentators. They viewed many films on economic principles and studied several pamphlets and books about economics as it is related to the many elements of the marketing and distributive education curriculum—on topics such as shoplifting prevention, taxation, advertising, merchandise selection, etc. The students had interesting opportunities to apply these theories through simulations relative to scarcity and supply-side economics. They did an intense study of the effect of the stock market on the economy in America and on changes which were occurring in the United States directly related to the stock market. It became quickly obvious to them that they had gained increased respect from the other members of our student body when other students all seemed very interested in looking at the posters my students had prepared and displayed in the main hall of the school which demonstrated changes in the stock market. My students' new vocabulary in conversations about economics also impressed their friends. This study increased their economic knowledge and met the goal of greatly increasing their personal image at Southside. They became very proud of the fact that they were definitely the most knowledgeable students in our school about the stock market and how supply and demand and interest rates had affected it.

When the students had learned the economic principles, they did an in-depth research project on the relationship of economics to changes in their lives. They developed a research questionnaire on changes in family life, society, and business. The students had lengthy conferences with their parents, grandparents, and resource persons in our community to determine whether changes were related directly to economics. The project gave them a new impression of the elderly people in our community. It greatly increased their respect for the society and for the resource persons with whom they had worked during their research. Completion of their research made them able to apply the economic principles of wants, scarcity, opportunity costs, etc. which they had learned earlier in the school year. It also made them learn how to do in-depth analytical studying. They now realized they would face changes in their near-adult life. Since they had begun to understand the causes of changes and their relation to economics, the students no longer had to feel insecure about facing the changes in the future.

By the end of the school year, my students were very willing to admit that they understood the initial thesis statement, agreed with it, and were extremely proud of their increased economic knowledge. They were delighted with the results of the test they took on economic literacy, which were excellent. They were no longer uneasy about what would happen after graduation, because now they knew how to prepare for the inevitable changes.

Objectives

1. To teach students the basic economic principles;
2. To encourage students to prepare for their future by improving their understanding of economics;
3. To lesson the students' fears of changes taking place in their lives;
4. To help students realize the great advantages they had compared to those of their parents and grandparents because of changes which are economics related;
5. To demonstrate to the students that marketing and distributive education is a practical application of economic theories;
6. To improve the students' self-image by making it obvious to them that after

completing this project they will have a much greater understanding of economics than most of their friends and will be in a better position to face the future;

7. To teach the students how to do analytic studying to prepare them for college classes;
8. To encourage the students to seriously consider changes which will occur in their lives by the year 2000 and to understand the relationship of the changes to economics.

Organization and Procedure

Early in the school year, I introduced economics vocabulary and principles to my students by using a "Market Your Knowledge of Economics" quiz in an unusual manner. Each student was given a copy of the quiz to study (including questions and answers) for a period of twenty minutes. The class was then divided into two groups—each group representing news commentators on a television station. The copies of the quiz were returned to my desk. The two groups of commentators were then given copies of the questions. One group then asked the commentators from the opposing television station the questions and requested the answers from them. As long as the second group could give correct answers, they were entitled to continue to be asked questions. Once they gave an incorrect answer, then the situation switched to the other television station news commentators.

Each news commentator (student) who gave a correct answer received a grade credit from the teacher. The oral quiz inspired the students to try harder to remember what they had learned. It also worked out well to introduce competition and to illustrate how it affects the economy because the students who were on the team of one of the television stations did not want their station to be defeated by the other one. They realized that the station which was more poorly respected would be less able to sell any advertising to its customers.

Before Christmas vacation we did a unit on shoplifting prevention, so that our marketing students would be better prepared to assist their employers in the prevention of shoplifting. In order to increase the students' knowledge of economics and how its principles are related to shoplifting, I had them complete an assignment sheet on the economic impact of shoplifting. Completing this project allowed them to understand the gigantic amount of sales it took to overcome shoplifting losses. They also saw how changes in the amount of shoplifting had been directly related to the economics of scarcity, wants, and supply and demand.

To introduce the economic concepts of taxation to the students, I next guided them for three weeks in a unit on understanding taxes. This unit included a section entitled "History of Taxation" which made it simple for the students to become aware of the major changes in our taxation format and to see how these changes were necessitated by the increased needs of our population. Participation in a simulation of supply-side economics gave these tax experts some thought as to the effect of taxes on economic incentives. It enabled them to better evaluate the effectiveness of Reagonomics—the economic situation in which they were currently living.

The tremendous upsurge in the stock market came at the perfect time. "'What Can the Stock Market Do for You?" was designed to give my students an opportunity to investigate the stock market and to understand the effect the stock market has on their personal lives and our economy. They visited a stock broker and learned about his business and the requirements for his career. They completed intensive study of the stock market—how it operates, its history, and how it affects our economy. After their study was completed, they each invested a hypothetical $5000 in stock. Each day they read the *Wall Street Journal* to determine increases or decreases in their investment value. They also invested $1.50 of real money. The real money was invested due to a competition. I have three classes. The class which obtained the largest return on investment after the six-week competition was given the $60 ($1.50 × 45 students) to have a party. My first period class won the $60 and was delighted to be known as stock market experts.

Another defense move to protect the validity of the original thesis statement was to present the students with one more economic research project from *Money Magazine*. It was a special report entitled "The Baby-Boomers—Can They Ever Live as Well as Their Parents?" It was an extremely well written set of articles which introduced the students to changes which had occurred and which will continue to occur in lifestyles, job opportunities, the cost of having children, finding housing, preparing for retirement, and making monetary investments. After completing this project, my students were definitely oriented to thinking about changes and economics. They were ready to apply all of this mental stimulation and the theories to the real world.

At this point my students were beginning to consider themselves as economic experts. They developed a list of categories they were interested in researching about the relationship of economics to changes. They considered: (1) Food, (2) Entertainment, (3) Homes, (4) Clothing, (5) Health Care, (6) Money, (7) Education, (8) Government, (9) Religion, (10) Family Relations, (11) Crime, (12) Business, (13) Transportation, (14) Athletics.

Next, they developed a questionnaire and had conferences with their parents, grandparents, and a large number of resource persons in our community. When they returned their questionnaires to class, we had a long, noisy discussion as they compared the answers. As we discussed the changes that were so apparent, we then analyzed how they had been related to economics. The students determined the economic concepts which had caused the changes, wrote them on the form, and then made large posters to place in the main hall of our school which would show the rest of the student body the results of their research. They illustrated how the changes which had occurred were primarily based on a change of wants, scarcity, national wealth growth, opportunity costs, increase in productivity, changes of supply and demand, and increases in technology.

After all the time and effort spent by my students in researching the relationship of economics to changes in life, the concluding activity was icing on the cake! Dr. Mollie Wilson, an economist located in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, attended our seminar. She discussed economic theories, the Federal Reserve System, made economic projections, and held a question/answer session with the students. Her discussion was followed by a film, *Your Kind of Town,* which described changes which had occurred in Ft. Smith over the past 100 years and projected changes. The text of the film contained economic terminology so it was an excellent method for the students to see the relationship of economics to change. It was also an "ego trip" for them to be able to easily understand all of the vocabulary in the film.

The students decided following the concluding activity that they did agree with the thesis statement. We thought the project was complete, but the day following the concluding activity one of my students almost knocked the door down to bring in a copy of the *U.S. News & World Report* entitled "What the Next 50 Years Will Bring." The students were absolutely positive that the authors of *U.S. News & World Report* had been aware of the research they had been doing because the magazine article was set up in almost exactly the same categories in which they had done research. We did not plan this special supplement to be a part of our concluding activity, but it was an unexpected *perfect* end to the projects. Based on the review of this magazine supplement, their research, and their vastly increased economic knowledge, the students could easily understand and relate economics to changes in their lives and in our world.

Your Part in Chicago's Economy

Barbara Reque
DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

Introduction

This project was organized to meet the needs for economic education of a large segment of the Chicago population, individuals with critical economic problems and little access to economic education: inner-city parents. Beginning in the 1980–81 school term, the DePaul Center worked with administrators of the Bureau of Early Childhood Education, Chicago Public Schools, to plan a program of consumer economics for these parents. Because the program was designed to help these parents function more effectively in the economy, its content emphasized the economy that most immediately affects these individuals: Chicago. To give the parents a sense of their own role as economic decision makers, the program title and theme was "Your Part in Chicago's Economy," and workshop sessions stressed the ways parents do take part in Chicago's economy.

Organization

During 1980–81, fifty-five schools participated in the project. One teacher from each school attended two in-service workshops at DePaul University. At the workshops, the teachers learned ways to explain the city's economy in terms relevant to parents on very low fixed incomes. While the workshops focused on everyday topics, such as food, they emphasized economic concepts, such as scarcity and trade-offs. Teachers received lesson plans to help them organize workshop sessions for parents at their schools. During the first year of the program, 311 parents completed at least six workshop sessions at the participating schools. These parents received certificates of recognition at a ceremony at DePaul University.

Continental Illinois Bank Foundation funded the project during its first year, and the Foundation increased the funding during the second year of the project. With the increased funding, filmstrips and cassettes on consumer economics were purchased, and these materials were made available to the participating schools during the 1981–82 school term. During this second project year, the Better Business Bureau, Household International, Illinois Bell, and the Mayor's Office of Consumer Affairs provided assistance through materials and speakers. More than 500 parents completed the program by spring of 1982.

In 1982–83, the program expanded greatly to include a total of 183 schools. Two factors affected this expansion: increased funding from Continental Illinois Bank Foundation and the participation of Headstart schools. Parents who had completed the project in the past years were recruited to serve as program associates, responsible for assisting at workshop sessions at the schools and for recruiting other parents to join the program. Requirements for receiving a certificate were increased: parents had to attend at least eight workshop sessions to complete the program. In June 1983, more than 800 parents received certificates of achievement for their work in this program. The program supporters included not only those firms and agencies that had provided assistance in the past years, but also the FDA, the University of Illinois Extension Service, and the Citizens' Information Service of the League of Women Voters.

The League of Women Voters was involved in the project during 1982–83 because Chicago was having a mayoral election, an election that would affect every citizen. Since the city's economy was one of the major concerns of the campaign, it was appropriate to educate the parents about their rights as voters and about opportunities they had to learn about the positions of candidates on the city's economy. The introduction of the election as a workshop session topic is an example of the effort made in this project to ensure relevance to the participants. In choosing the topics of the workshops, teachers, parents, and program administrators covered aspects of the economy that were most important to the low-income parents this program serviced.

Without real participation by parents, the project would have been yet another exercise in well-intentioned but ineffective education. For parents really to participate, they first must be interested in what they are to learn. They are, after all, volunteering to attend these sessions. By focusing on topics of relevance to the parents, the project ensured that they would find the content of interest. Yet there was no guarantee that people would comprehend what was presented no matter how relevant the topic. Therefore, the workshop session outlines were organized to provide for participation by the parents so that they would have the opportunity to express their views on the topic, to clarify the presentation as the workshop proceeded. Activity sheets for parents to work on during the sessions involved them in applying the ideas that were presented to real experiences, such as evaluating the value of toys or using the Yellow Pages to find out about the variety of service industries in the city.

When an individual teaches something to someone else, that individual usually clarifies what is taught not only for the learner but also for the teacher. To extend the project beyond the workshop session, parents received two kinds of take-home materials. One set of activity sheets was developed for parents to use to continue to deal with the workshop topic, such as keeping track of job opportunities in the newspaper. Another set of sheets was developed for parents to use to teach their young children some of the ideas they had considered in the workshop. For example, parents who had dealt with budgeting money in a workshop session took home a sheet they used with their children to budget time. In both instances, parents focused on an economic concept basic to economics: scarcity. In both instances, parents found practical applications of this concept in terms of their own lives.

Evaluation

While it was the immediate goal of this project to provide economic education for inner-city parents, the project had two very significant long-term goals: the development of knowledge and skills of parents so that they could function more effectively in the city's economy, and the development of the ability and knowledge of teachers to organize and present economic education programs independently. The program led to the development of 183 independent programs, coordinated through this project but responsive to the specific needs and problems of parents in the different parts of the city. During the first year of the program, teachers followed the lesson plans literally and did not have the confidence to add their own sessions to the project. During the second year, several teachers did innovate, adding field experiences for parents and additional materials the teachers collected from community agencies. During the third year, many of the teachers added new components to the project, particularly field trips.

It is clear that teachers in the program gained knowledge, confidence, and skills during the three years. The evidence of this accomplishment was clear in the lesson plans they prepared for the sessions they added to the project. Those plans enriched the resource base of all the participating schools. While there was no objective evidence that the program has had a significant impact on the economic independence of the participating parents, subjective evidence indicated that the program has been effective in that area, too. Teachers reported that parents used a new set of terms when discussing financial situations, terms such as trade-off—terms introduced through this project. Teachers and parents also reported that there was a change in some parents' personal economies: planning was longer-term than it was, and saving actually became an option for some of the families that had not considered it a possibility before.

Conclusion

There are, of course, many thousands of people who live below the poverty line and need to understand the options and problems that they confront every day. This project reached several thousand people who attended some or all of its workshop sessions. Because the parents and teachers continued to support the project by participating, we are confident that it provided a valuable educational resource for inner-city parents. While we will never reach all the people we would like to involve in this economic education project, as it continues to expand and to build independence in the teachers and parents who participate, it will make an important difference to people who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to realize how Chicago's economy works—and their part in this economic system.

GOOD IDEAS IN BRIEF: OPEN CATEGORY

JOAN SPENCE of the *Spotswood Senior High, Penn Laird, Virginia,* developed "Financial Planning: Does the Goose Always Lay a Golden Egg?" for use with a heterogeneous grouping of high school seniors in a government class setting over a four-week period. The instructor felt that students needed to be aware of planning financial goals and living within an income range. She wanted them to be ready to assume financial responsibilities after school. Students were asked to think about their own careers, future income, household expenses, budgeting, and credit. Classroom lectures, discussions, audiovisuals, handouts, and various other student activities were employed. Small group work formed the core of the program. Students learned that hard work and income can be just like the goose and *not* produce the security of a golden egg without careful discipline and planning.

DE RUTHA GARDNER RICHARDSON, head of the *Muskogee High School* Business Department and teacher/coordinator of Cooperative Office Education, *Muskogee, Oklahoma,* designed and implemented a unit entitled "America's Love Affair—Something Old; Something New; Something Borrowed; Something Blew!" Two general objectives were met: (1) to have students interview and interact with people in business, professionals, and adults in order to obtain practical information and opinions based on current economic trends; and (2) to provide students with training/experience and a broad background in the steps involved and the economic responsibilities of automobile purchases and ownerships of new, used, or repossessed cars. Each of the fifteen student participants had to make arrangements to have a sales representative visit the class to explain the procedures involved in buying a car. Auto representatives also brought the selected automobile to school and, after the analysis, the students test-drove their selected cars. After selections were made, the students theoretically were placed 1,983 miles from Muskogee. The homeward trip was covered through activities and assignments: research and oral reports; reviews from four study modules; mastering automobile terminology; and participating in a car contest and in "Newspaper in Education Week," where advertisements, articles, and travel information were discussed and documented. A written evaluation of the program and a notebook regarding each car served as concluding activities.

CAROLYN JOHNSON LUCE, reading teacher and drill team sponsor, *Darby Junior High School, Fort Smith, Arkansas,* became involved in teaching economics when her drill team was in desperate need of money. Costs for the drill team were high—uniforms had to be purchased, contest entry fees had to be paid, and props had to be purchased. Undaunted by their previous negative experiences in the sale of goods, the girls decided to choose a talent show to net 100 percent profit. Capital goods were borrowed to keep investments to a minimum and their entrepreneur (better known as the reading teacher) added some human resourcefulness in the costume and master of ceremonies departments. In the process of developing their show, the girls gained knowledge about limited resources, competition, scarcity, opportunity cost, supply and demand, profit motive, and circular flow. Their economic goal, as well as much interdependence, was reached by supplying this specialized service for the community.

SARA BOONE BAIRD, coordinator of economic education at *The Collegiate Schools* in *Richmond, Virginia,* planned and guided the school's economic education program in the third year of her plan for a model program sponsored by the E. Angus Powell Endowment for American Enterprise. Over 55 percent of the faculty in kindergarten through grade twelve completed courses in basic economics and taught units in the subject at many levels. Exemplary curricular units and innovative teaching methods were developed for students and publicized to serve as a motivating force for teachers and other school systems to develop similar programs. Professional seminars for teachers and administrators were held and *The Marketplace Messenger,* an economics newsletter, was published and distributed to 500 educators and business leaders. Economics Awareness Week for all students was observed. A junior-senior economics course was developed and taught by a university economics professor. A day-long seminar on economic issues was planned in conjunction with the staff of Congressman Stan Parris of Virginia and students heard their government's leaders in Congress and the Treasury Department. Governor Charles S. Robb of Virginia received in his executive office a primary one class and personally congratulated the students for a successful business venture. In addition to the integration of economics into history, government, social studies, math, and language courses, economics was included in the school's new computer curriculum. Computer software for teaching economics in K–6, developed by Collegiate teachers, received first place in national competition. Elementary students competed in a computer simulation by making management decisions that affected the profit derived from a business. A six-week summer economics institute enrolled 33 future high school seniors for a work/study experience in the American enterprise system. The Collegiate Schools' program was awarded the George Washington Honor Medal by Freedoms Foundation for excellence in economic education in 1983. The results of the JCEE's literacy tests, administered to fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders, reflected the successful teaching of economics. The Marketplace for Economic Education at The Collegiate Schools provided its 1,370 students with many opportunities to understand the American economic system and their roles in it today and in the future.

LINDA MCPHERON, JEANNE FREEZE, and LES RUBIN, *Largo C & I Center, Largo, Florida,* coordinated an Economics Fair for the Pinellas County school district. The Fair was designed to showcase a quality economic education curriculum. A wide variety of displays, demonstrations, and materials were developed and submitted as project entries by teachers of kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Fair Day also provided a forum for staff development workshops highlighting important topics in the field of economics. A musical performance by elementary students and an Economics Quiz Bowl for middle school students were special features of the day. Teacher projects were entered in three categories: teacher-developed materials, displays, and student demonstrations. These categories were subdivided into grade-level divisions: K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. Representatives of business, the school system, and the community provided their expertise as judges; their task was to determine award-winning projects. The community, university, and school system also provided resource speakers who presented valuable information and insight to workshop participants. Since the Fair was held on a staff development day, teachers from all over the county were invited and encouraged to attend. This involvement served as a motivating force to encourage greater future interest and effort in teaching economics. The Fair activity was ended with an Awards Dinner to which all teachers who entered projects were invited. The dinner was sponsored and hosted by a local business. Plaques and/or cash awards were presented to project winners and all teachers were congratulated on a job well done.

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